

MOUTHS OF THE ENTWASH™

#8011



A Fantasy Role Playing adventure module from
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH

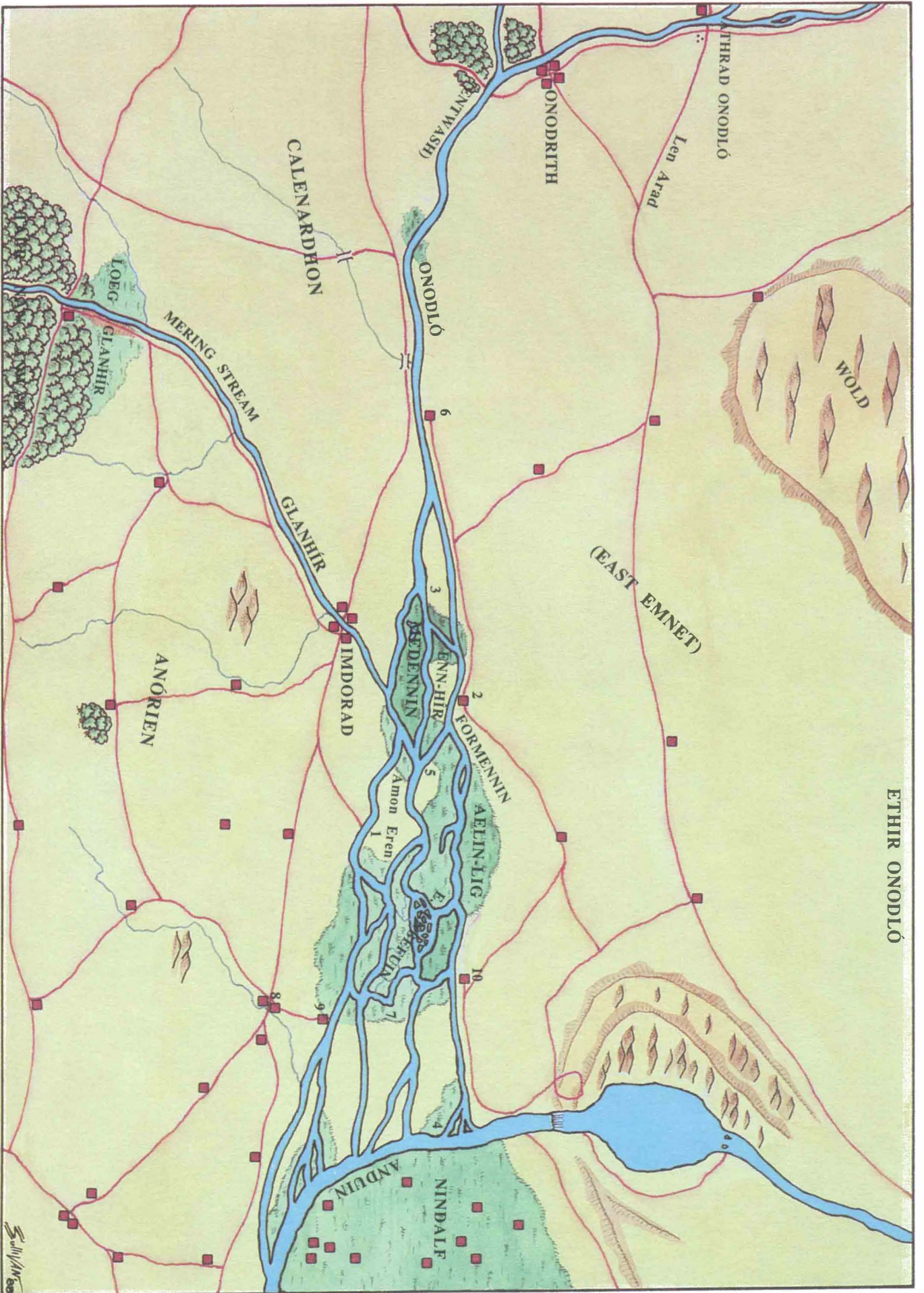


Playable with



Rolemaster™

Based on THE HOBBIT™ and THE LORD OF THE RINGS™, this supplement details the wild delta that dominates eastern Rohan. In this marsh the Entwash meets the mighty Anduin river, and unwary travellers encounter unexpected dangers. This module features 3 complete adventures. All are self contained and can easily be used in other locales. MOUTHS also links with I.C.E.'s RIDERS OF ROHAN™ campaign module.



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Imcamir savored the marsh: the thick mists, the strange sounds, the eerie mix of lurid color splashed against the rotting forest curtain. It was always a shrouded place where the Scout could retreat and find peace — a place where a man could never forget that he was very much alive. By Yavanna, he loved the marsh.

Trailing a line, Imcamir quietly rowed toward the Herons' Mere. A light breeze fingered the water ahead, driving away the relentless gnats and grounding the dragonfly that rested on his spear. It was a good day to find pike.

Suddenly, two Blue Otters darted over a great log that blocked the bend up ahead. They swam hard, like beasts touched by the face of doom. Imcamir's stomach stirred as he realized that he had taken the wrong channel. Muttering a curse, he frantically reversed course.

The boat lurched sideways as a great algae-tinged wave poured over the gunwhale. Engulfed in the fetid shower, Imcamir fought to hang on and stay afloat. All the while, the panicked cries of birds rung through the spray-filled air.

The Scout knew he had become prey... "Araw!" he cried, as he tumbled into the stream.

1.0 GUIDELINES

Fantasy role playing is akin to a living novel where the players are the main characters. Everyone combines to write a story which is never short of adventure. They help create a new land and strange new tales.

This series is designed as a tool for Gamemasters (GMs) who wish to run scenarios or campaigns set in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth. The adventure modules are complete and ready-to-run studies of very specific areas, and are intended to be used with a minimum of additional work. Each has statistical information based on the *Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP)* and *Rolemaster (RM)* fantasy systems. The modules are, however, adaptable for use with most major role playing games. Creative guidelines, not absolutes, are emphasized.

PROFESSOR TOLKIEN'S LEGACY

Each module is based on extensive research and attempts to meet the high standards associated with the Tolkien legacy. Rational linguistic, cultural, and geological data are employed. Interpretive material has been included with great care, and fits into defined patterns and schemes. ICE does not intend it to be the sole or proper view; instead, we hope to give the reader the thrust of the creative processes and the character of the given area.

Remember that the ultimate sources of information are the works of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien. Posthumous publications edited by his son Christopher shed additional light on the world of Middle-earth. These modules are derived from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, although they have been developed so that no conflict exists with any of the other sources.

1.1 ABBREVIATIONS

GAME SYSTEMS

MERP *Middle-earth Role Playing*

RM *Rolemaster*

MIDDLE-EARTH TERMS

A Adûnaic	Kh Khuzdul (Dwarvish)
BS Black Speech	LotR .. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i>
Cir Cirth or Certar	Or Orkish
D Dunaël (Dunlending)	Q Quenya
Du Daenaël (Old Dunaël)	R Rohirric
E Edain	Rh Rhovanion
El Eldarin	S Sindarin
Es Easterling	S.A Second Age
1.A First Age	Si Silvan Elvish
F.A Fourth Age	T.A Third Age
Hi Hillman	Teng ... Tengwar
H Hobbitish (Westron variant)	V Variag
Har Haradrim	W ... Westron (Common Speech)
Hob Hobbit	Wo Wose (Druédain)
Kd Kuduk (ancient Hobbitish)	

CHARACTER STATS

Ag Agility (RM/MERP)	Me Memory (RM)
Co Constitution (RM/MERP)	Ig Intelligence (MERP)
St Strength (RM/MERP)	Re Reasoning (RM)
PR Presence (RM/MERP)	Em Empathy (RM)
It(In) Intuition (RM/MERP)	Qu Quickness (RM)
Sd Self Discipline (RM)	

GAME TERMS

AT Armor Type	Lvl Level (exp. or spell level)
bp bronze piece(s)	MA Martial Arts
cp copper piece(s)	Mod Modifier or Modification
Crit Critical strike	mp mithril piece(s)
D Die or Dice	NPC Non-player Character
D100 .. Percentile Dice Result	OB Offensive bonus
DB Defensive Bonus	PC Player Character
FRP Fantasy Role Playing	PP Power Points
GM Gamemaster	R or Rad Radius
gp gold piece(s)	Rnd or Rd Round
ip iron piece(s)	RR Resistance Roll
jp jade piece(s)	Stat Statistic or Characteristic
tp tin piece(s)	

1.2 ADAPTING THIS MODULE

Like the rest of the series, this module is designed for use with the *Middle-earth Role Playing* game (**MERP**) or the more advanced *Rolemaster* (**RM**) system, but is adaptable to most other major FRP games. Statistics are expressed on a closed or open-ended scale, using a 1-100 base and percentile dice (D100). No other dice are required.

1.21 CONVERTING HITS AND BONUSES

Bonuses: When converting percentile values to a 1-20 system a simple rule is: for every +5 on a D100 scale you get a +1 on a D20.

Hits: The concussion hit numbers found in this module only represent general pain and system shock. They cover bruises and small cuts rather than wounds. Critical strike damage is used to describe serious wounds and fatal blows. The hit figures shown here are less important than those used in game systems where death occurs as a result of exceeding one's available hits. Should you use a game system that employs no specific critical strike results (e.g., TSR Inc.'s *Dungeons and Dragons* ®), simply double the number of hits your characters take or halve the hit values found in this module.

1.22 CONVERSION CHART

If you play something other than **MERP** or **Rolemaster** and you do not use a percentile system, use the following chart to convert 1-100 numbers to figures suited to your game.

1-100 Stat	D100 Bonus	D20 Bonus	3-18 Stat	2-12 Stat
102+	+35	+7	20+	17+
101	+30	+6	19	15-16
100	+25	+5	18	13-14
98-99	+20	+4	17	12
95-97	+15	+3	16	—
90-94	+10	+2	15	11
85-89	+5	+1	14	10
75-84	+5	+1	13	9
60-74	0	0	12	8
40-59	0	0	10-11	7
25-39	0	0	9	6
15-24	-5	-1	8	5
10-14	-5	-1	7	4
5-9	-10	-2	6	3
3-4	-15	-3	5	—
2	-20	-4	4	2
1	-25	-4	4	2

2.0 PORTRAITS AND LANDSCAPES

"Some say there's a castle in the Slough where a good lady lives and protects all those who go astray, with a flock of pied swans to lead them home. So it goes, she came here to dwell in a lovely, distant spot, away from the shame of Men, like the Elves in all the old tales. But there's another story — of an evil sorceress who never ages, living in a castle made from the skulls of poor, drowned fishermen. So if you see a lady all dressed in white upon a white horse, with long fair hair and a silver bridle, do be sure to come back and tell us the truth of it."

The Mouths of the Entwash (S. "Ethr Onodló") cover over one and a half thousand square miles. As measured along the shortest route the green-winged crow can fly, the river divides one hundred and twenty miles upstream of the Anduin. The southern channel weaves and winds its way for almost two hundred miles through bog, marsh, fen and breckland, continually splitting and rejoining itself.

To the east, the Onodló divides Calenardhon and northern Anórien from the Emnets, the furthest pasturelands of Gondor's empire. (Later this land is called Rohan.) A well-travelled trade route, the river connects the granaries, herders and wool merchants of Calenardhon with the Anduin, Gondor's main artery. The Entwash rises in the Forest of Fangorn and spills out across the lush plains east of the Misty Mountains; below Athrad Onodló (S. "Entwade"), the river broadens and slows and can no longer be bridged or forded. Its final juncture with the Anduin is a confused delta of myriad streams. Once, in its youth, the river followed a single course; but as the land sunk with the tremors of upheaval at the end of the First Age, it became slower and siltier, building great levees in its lower stretches. Its swollen spring waters cut through a tilted, limestone block, but not before it carved new paths and inundated the land. Over the centuries it continued to open new channels, sometimes re-using old ones, braiding itself, leaving behind stagnant waters, islets, causeways, reed banks, mud flats, quicksands, bogs, and hidden pools.

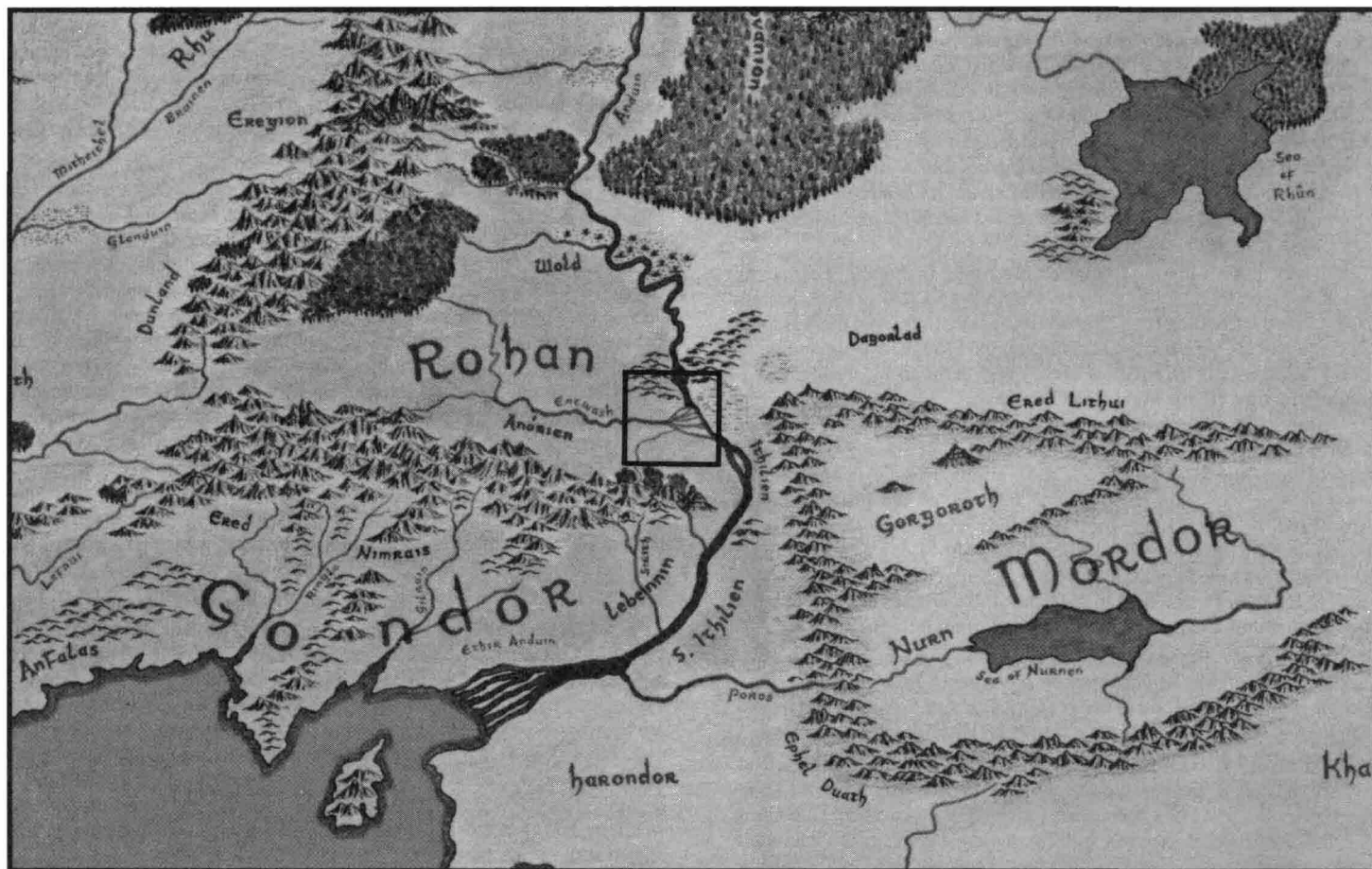
Yet the King values this line of communication with the northwestern plains. One channel through the maze of waterways remains dredged and safe (or at least relatively so) for the agrarian tradesmen of Calenardhon. Like the Limlight and the Anduin itself, the Onodló is patrolled by the Gondorian River Patrol's small boats, and there are numerous garrisons stationed about to protect the traveller from bandits — as well as to collect the King's tolls and dues.

"Ain't no need to get lost in the marsh; not even in t' Slough. Find yissen a pool of clear water and cut a switch of alder, nobbut more 'n a handslength, stroke it three times then peel its black bark halfway down, in two strips, mind. When you set him in the water, 'is bare end' ll point north, sure as hosses is hosses."

Although there are precious few dwellers within the Ethir itself, a number of small settlements surround it. The largest of these is Imdorad (S. "Between Two Provinces"), the Mering Steps. This town is small but busy, situated on a bridge across the Mering Stream (S. "Glanhír"), and dominated by the large stone garrison-house. This is the seat and office of the Customs Master of the lower Onodló, a senior official appointed by the governors of Anórien and Calenardhon who is responsible for collecting taxes and pursuing the smugglers who plague the region. Smuggling, the "Black Trade," has become something of a local tradition.

The Customs Master and his garrison, together with the River Patrol, do a fairly good job of keeping order in the civilized lands, despite the widely spread population. Like all lands, these were hit badly by the Plague and few communities survived unscathed. In some cases the loss of life destroyed villages, hamlets and steadings, and handfuls of struggling survivors abandoned their former livelihoods to beg a share of others. Now, in the lands north of the Entwash, it is quite possible to walk all day and not see a soul.

Law enforcement lapsed in the aftermath of the depopulating Plague, and many who were denied the ability to work the land turned to banditry. Outlaws flourished, but in the years since, most either gave up the hard life, or got captured and punished. Only a few doughty bands survive, raiding merchants and farms, stealing sheep and rustling cattle or horses, and conducting a little "black" trade themselves.



There are two outposts in the Ethir Onodló: a garrison at Fen's Edge (S. "Len Parmuil") and a tower known as Micandor's Tower (S. "Barad Micandor"). These units are supported by the River Patrol, which is stationed at Twyferry (S. "Gwanlend"). The River Patrol includes marines, pilots and the crews of the two dredger boats, men who keep the Nog Mennin (S. "Delled Waterway") clear of silt and weed. All are under the command of three Captains stationed at Twyferry, a trio with whom the Customs Master frequently confers.

"You'm beware a' them things as lurk in the marsh. They b' ain't be na' ral, full a' that old, bad magic — i' is all witchery. Never look at silver, nor at y' own 'flection in the water, that's what I say."

The main waters of the Ethir Onodló are as follows. After Twyferry, the river divides and the branch to the north is called the Formennin (S. "North Channel"). It skirts the north edge of the Medennin (S. "Wet-vale-waters"), the so-called Midden, a marshy swamp formed where the Enn-hîr (S. "Middle Stream") breaks away from the southernmost channel, by common consent thought to be the Onodló proper.

The Enn-hîr takes the Nog Mennin through the centre of the delta and past Micandor's Tower to the beginning of the Siriath Lain (S. "Threaded Waters"). This network of islands and waterways confuse the Enn-hîr and so the Nog Mennin takes a major channel to rejoin the Onodló. This general area, before the slight rise of a limestone ridge, is a huge mire, and about the most unpleasant region hereabouts. The first settlers from Gondor called it E Unbéfuin (S. "The Sink of Gloom") and its most common name is the Slough, though it is also referred to as Gloamingholow, Gloaminghole, and Darklemere.

North of the Formennin, the Slough is more open and less dank, but a place of danger nonetheless: Aelin Lig (S. "Snakesmere") well deserves its name. Its pools writhe with an abundance of reptilian life, creatures which feed on the delta's many frogs and toads.

"When I were just a lad, the year 'fore I got hitched, that were forty year ago, old Gestir landed his nets one evenin' and said as how summat had got caught in 'em. There' d been a great thrashing about and a splashing, so he said, then he'd put in with his spear and all of a sudden it stopped, an' he lost his spear. So he shows us his nets, and there in his boat, little skiff he had, with blue painted paddles, there was his nets squirming with eels and under them this black shape. Huge, with legs pokin' out like a girt big frogget or toad. So he pulls the nets off it, us giving him a hand, and it had this horrible head, nasty wide lips and teeth — oh, its teeth were like strips of briar, all knobbly and spiked. And it had two saucers for eyes, bigger'n my hands. Only one was all put out and oozing, see, cause Gestir's spear had gone just by accident into its head and killed it stone dead. Mind you, there's many others lost in the Midden, I can tell you."

However, not all the land between the rivers is marsh. The narrow tongue between the Onodló and Formennin is called Breckisle, a sandy place where the flooding river deposits its heaviest silt. And there is rough moorland pasture between the Midden and the Slough, overlooked by the Lonely Middle Hill (S. "Amon Eren") and claimed by the herders of Ardalmar, a tiny village known as Overwash.

A number of tributaries empty into the southern flanks of the delta, and the most notable of these cool torrents is the Mering Stream. This rises in a cleft of the White Mountains (S. "Ered Nimrais") hidden deep within the Wood of Awe (S. "Taur-nan-Anwar;" later called the Firien Wood or "Aron Ered"). Beyond the wood it spreads into the Mering Marsh (S. "Loeg Glanhîr;" also called the Silent Marsh or "Loeg Dín"). Into the lower delta flows the Sunnet (S. "Orennir"), bridged at Sunbridge (S. "Iant Anor"). Here, as everywhere in the Ethir, the wetlands are rich in color, smell, and sound — signs of vibrant, albeit often unseen, life.

"But you don't want to let those midges and flitches get to you my love. Look, if you're bothered by them pesky little blood-biters, come buzzing round you in the evening, just you find some old bell-rushes — mind out there's not a flower on their plump brown heads — and drip a bit o' wax or oil on them then set 'em alight. Won't smell much to you, but it'll keep them skeeters away."

3.0 TOWNS AND VILLAGES

IMDORAD

NOTE: This small town is described in Adv. I at Sec. 6.3.

MeringSteps lies at a long-established crossing point over the Mering Stream. The "Steps" are actually stone piles sunk in the river, supporting a wooden bridge. The town itself is divided by the river, with the more important half on the western (Calenardhon) side. Here, a number of large buildings, including the stone garrison-house, surround the Market Place. Erected four hundred years ago from strong White Mountain stone, it is a local marvel and a substantial hold.

On the edge of the town is the Stewardry, a pair of long barns joined by a house. These barns hold most of the taxes collected by the Customs Master, since locals prefer to pay in kind rather than coin. There are numerous shops, workshops, and residences on both sides of the river, many of them thatched, as reeds are in plentiful supply thanks to the proximity of the Lisgarath (S. "Reed-beds") of the marshes.

ARDALMAR

Overwash is a village of some thirty households, and is the sole settlement on the fen and moorland between the Slough and the Midden. Built with wood, the village sits atop a raised mound. Its houses sit on stilts, for flooding presents a constant danger. During very bad floods, all the goods are packed up and the houses covered into rafts, to be floated off to, Amon Eren, the sole hill within Ethir Onodló (which lies about six miles north of the village).

Half the villagers are herders and half hunters and fishers. The herders keep flocks of sturdy sheep in the poor grazing lands, these sheep actually flourishing and producing excellent lamb and mutton as well as plentiful wool. Seeking fur and game in season, the hunters spend the rest of the year fishing for eels, perch, and loach. Each year, thousands of eels migrate through the marshlands to breed upstream, then return accompanied by manifold the number of elvers (young eels).

The current headman is Mardo Hall (Mardo the Tall) an egotistical trapper who bullied the last headman into nominating him. No one has since dared to oppose him. Few are gravely concerned thus far, but he does not treat the Emerhim (S. "Shepherds") well. Mardo is very aware of his own skills and prowess, and with some justification, for he is a big, strong man. He has a timid wife and has been known to force himself on any other woman he fancies.

The villagers here speak a very broad and accented Westron, and can be difficult to understand.

GWANLEND

The divided village of Twyferry marks the beginning of the Nog Mennin, the King's expensive project to keep the Onodló fully navigable to the Anduin. The two dredger boats are both based here, each under a Captain of the River Patrol Engineers. There is also a well-organised ferry service costing a silver piece per person, baggage negotiable. A River Patrol garrison under a third Captain mans the light, fast boats which crack down on smugglers, water-bandits and other undesirables. Twyferry has a Warden appointed by the Governor of Calenardhon who acts jointly with the Captains; currently this is Sarvelich, a lawyer from Calmirië, rewarded for past services. He is an old widower with several grown children. The eldest, Cormacar, is an adventurer always willing to join an exciting trip.

Gwanlend survives mostly as a stopover point for boat-travellers, so there are several inns to choose from. In addition, the village boasts tradesmen and craftsmen, including a builder, carpenter, smith and thatcher, as well as spinners and weavers.

LEN PARMUIL

Fen's Edge is little more than a garrison and fishyard. The garrison is jointly for the River Patrol and the King's Men seconded from Mering Steps. Beside the stone garrison tower is a stretch of bank occupied by numerous boathouses where fishermen land their daily catches. Others are on hand to weigh it, buy it, clean it, and pack it ready for resale in the markets of Gondor. Spring is the busiest time, with the eel catch piling up before its hourly processing. Eel jelly, a local and rather special delicacy, is smoked and boiled in the vast cauldrons that line the wharf during fair weather. The garrison men complain bitterly of the smell and few eat fish readily after a turn here!

FORODLÓ

Northwash stands well protected on the slow-moving north stream of the delta. Flood waters are less prone to swell this particular branch, and the levees are stronger. Nevertheless, the inhabitants build no stone houses; only wooden ones cluster atop this small, sandy knoll. These folk exploit the wealth of the river in many ways: north and east of the village old channels once ran and now the marsh has dried, and the peat left behind is cut for fuel. On the banks of the Formennin, floating wooden pontoons mark out galasenin beds. The trappers and hunters draw their punts and coracles alongside these floats after venturing into the Midden. These resourceful marshmen make their way by trapping mink, otter, and vole, catching young hawks and harriers, and shooting duck, goose, grebe, and heron.

The folk of Northwash are somewhat taciturn and gruff by nature, having a particular dislike for those south of the delta. Travellers are apt to have the door slammed in their face. They have no headman, preferring a kind of fierce independence. Since the loss of so many communities in the Emnets after the Plague, they have fallen outside most jurisdiction, with only an occasional River Patrol visit.

TEL PELENAS

This small settlement of Marshmen is the only village across the Anduin from their home territory of Nindalf (S. "Wetwang"). It is of typical structure: a circle of huts surrounded by gardens and set upon a dry patch of a marshy isle right at the end of the delta, near the confluence of the Anduin and Formennin. The Marshmen are the only dwellers in this lower marsh area. Mikelin is chief here and her sister Mikarel is Priestess of Jevinnë. Mikarel is noted for her ability to raise all manner of plants. There is no resident Priest of Eremi, but Jasherë the Ancient often visits in his walnut shell-like coracle. (See Section 8.0.)

MISTHAM

Mistham is a small village on the edge of the Slough. It also includes some scattered farms which located to the east, along the fine pastures of the Formennin. Around ten dairy farmers reside here, while another few keep sheep on the margin of the marsh and inland. Other than these

landowners, the principal residents include a number of hunters and trappers. Some of these rugged rovers even dare Snakesmere, a notoriously dangerous stretch of bog, where they catch snakes and lizards for their highly prized skins. Mistham makes a rich, golden-red cheese known to all epicureans.

"Look out for the farmers' friends, they'll bring you good luck. At harvest time they're made from corn, tall figures wreathed about and plaited from stalks with fanned hair and skirtles. When the cold months come they dress a tree, hang ribbons and painted bobbins on it. With winter snows they build snow bears, sturdy images of the fabled northern bears that drive back the wolves and protect all from the cruel hunger of ice. In spring, the green friends appear, woven from withies: the biggest of them is the Greenwitch of Northwash, sunk by the womenfolk on Summer's Eve."

4.0 FAUNA

There are many living things in the Ethir Onodló, certainly too many to mention all of them here. But marshland marks one of the ancient places of dread for the Children of Eru, for is it not said in the *Quenta Silmarillion*:

"And beasts came forth and dwelt in the grassy plains, or in the rivers and lakes, or walked in the shadows of the woods - nonetheless the evil of Melkor and the blight of his hatred flowed out. Green things fell sick and rotted, and rivers were choked with weeds and slime, and fens were made, rank and poisonous, the breeding place of flies; and beasts became monsters of horn and ivory and dyed the earth with blood."

— *Sil.* p. 30.

The tables in the back of this book give a sampling of typical beasts, birds and fishes which might be encountered in the delta and also give the names in Sindarin for those and others.

BEASTS

Auroch: The Auroch is a domesticated breed of the wild cattle or kine that roam Rhovanion.

Black Mink: Carnivorous mammals reaching up to 4' in length and 80 lbs, Black Minks are voracious eaters and cunning in planning their attacks. In the spring they congregate to mate and can go berserk, attacking anything in their path, no matter how large. Mink cannot be driven off or stunned and will fight to a bloody death. Their pelts are worth up to 10gp each: the fur is thick, glossy and entirely waterproof.

Blue Otter: While similar to their more mundane brethren, Blue Otters are larger (averaging 5-7' in length) and have flattened tails with sharp crests on each edge. They generally travel in small groups during the day, feeding on fish eggs, smaller aquatic mammals, and birds. Using tree roots as structural supports, they reside in dens cut into larger, stabler sandbars or riverbanks. Here they produce litters of only one or two young each year. It is not surprising then, that Blue Otters are endangered. Fortunately, the King has interceded and banned their hunting, for their breeding pattern, coupled with their large profile and valuable pelts, makes them ideal targets for extinction.

Dappled Deer: Akin to the Roe Deer (Fiara) of Eriador, the Dappled Deer is small, hardy, and pugnacious creature. Only the stags fight, but they are exceptionally skiddish and aggressive, especially in Spring. They usually employ their horns, which can effectively penetrate mail.

Fen Boar: Fen Boars are smaller than their forest-dwelling relatives, who can gorge on nuts all autumn. However, they make for good hunting and tasty eating. Males can be dangerous if cornered, lashing out with the long tusks they normally employ for digging in the mud for tasty roots, as well as for grubbing out rotten meat.

Grey Wolf: Grey Wolves will not cross large streams, and hence they are only found on the north side of the Formennin. While typically interested only in sheep and other herd animals, they may attack lone men during hard winters or famines.

Marsh Mastiff: Marsh Mastiffs are tall, domesticated dogs, with long legs and short wiry coats, which are usually colored dark brown or russet. Well-liked by shepherds, herders, and as hunting dogs, they can be trained to many tasks. They are sure-footed and are good swimmers; they have keen noses. Above all, they are fearless and loyal to their masters. They are often equipped with collars and even leathern coats.

The Black Mink



Marsh Pony: More common than the Wild Horse within the delta, the Perroch-i-Lin is short and grey, with a long, silky mane.

Merisc Tyke: Merisc Tyke is local name for the wild dog (possibly a relative of the feral dogs of the Talath Harroch). They frequent the fens and moorlands in small packs, usually scavenging or attacking young sheep, ponies, and the like. Easily scared off, they are especially afraid of fire. The Tyke has a dappled coat of yellowish-tan and brownish-grey (giving it a +40 Hiding bonus).

Pond Bat: A small black creature, the Pond Bat rarely attacks men unless panicked and confused, or trapped. It is, however, a noted carrier of fleas and other parasites, which it can leave in dwellings and camps. Thus, they are a common cause of Cyclic Fever.

Wild Goat: Essentially descendants of various escaped domestic varieties, the local Wild Goats have dirty, shaggy coats and short, black horns. Their small, sharp hooves make them agile; however, they restrict the beasts' movements in the boglands, where wide feet provide stability.

Wild Horse: The Wild Horse, or Horse of the Plains (S. "Rechelaid"), make good mounts, although they are hard to break. Much used by Easterlings, they are now herded in the Emnets. A few may be found in the marshes, for they do not mind swimming.

Wild Sheep: Disease-resistant and sturdy, Wild Sheep were probably introduced by Eriadorians on their way to Rhovanion. Rare in the swamps and boglands, they resemble most closely the Harbdo cross-bred sheep of Cardolan.

"Listen —along the streams in the delta there walks the strangest man, if man he be. They call him Long Lankin, and his legs are over ten yards long. His hair is green as pondweed, his eyes are black.

....and he EATS PEOPLE!!"

BIRDS

Birds of Prey: There are many birds of prey, from the far-ranging golden eagle to the fish-eating Screaming Harrier and the swift-stooping hawk. All are very unlikely to attack men. They may be caught while young and trained as excellent hunters.

Ducks, Geese and other Swimmers: The delta is home for dozens of varieties of duck and goose, migratory avians generally differentiated by their coloring (e.g., the green-headed duck, the white bar goose and the red legged pochard). There are also stately grebes with long necks and paddling feet. Largest are the swans, notably the royal swans (brilliantly white with silver wingtips and golden bills) and the supposedly magical pied swans (S. "Eilph Tithen").

Jatewoone: The Jatewoone is also known as the Cleaverbeak or Marsh Bird. Standing 9' tall and endowed with swan-like necks and long, powerful legs, these white waterfowl sport a scarlet band across the eyes. They live on snakes, fish and small mammals, but they will attack anything that surprises them, using their talons and huge, bony bill. Jatewoones can fly but more commonly they stalk or run through the marsh.

Short-eared Owl: Only day-hunting owl, the Short-eared Owl is quite small but, like other birds of Middle-earth, not unintelligent. They were taught by the Elves to speak and have their own language, and one close to Nature can derive helpful information from them.

Waders & Fishers: The wading and fishing birds of the delta are many, including some of the largest birds around, such as the crane, stork, pelican, and heron. Even the occasional spoonbill or flamingo may visit from the South. There are also smaller birds such as the stilt, curlew, and

snipe, as well as the bittern with its strange resonant, mournful cry. The crane has wide, splayed feet, allowing it to dash across pondweed and mudflats. Its relative, the coot, builds island nests up to three or four feet across from reeds and weeds. The smallest fisher, the kingfisher, is also the most attractive. His riverbank hole-home is one of the dirtiest, however, being full of old fish bones and rotting mess.

Smaller Birds: Naturally, there are many species of smaller birds in the delta. Like all wild areas, Ethir Onodló is plagued with gorcrows and other carrion birds such as the hopta (an infrequent visitor from the west). However, there are marsh tits, firecrests, game birds such as pigeon and quail, song birds like the thrush and warbler. Collectively, they fill the wetlands with a chorus of entertaining songs.

"Pay no heed to the boom of the bittern

Ignore the whoop of the swan

But two crane calls is the sign of rain

And three calls means there'll be sun."

The Short-eared Owl



FISH

Eels and Other Small Fish: Small fish abound in the streams of the delta, where fishermen ply their trade. By far the largest catch is in spring, when the eels return to their spawning grounds. The male eel is up to 2' long, while the female reaches 5'. Other fish include the loach or barbling, the carp-like mairenke and the perch.

Lamprey: The lamprey is a parasite that attaches itself to other fish (or occasionally other creatures), like a leech with a circular jaw. It then remains in place, slowly burrowing into the flesh and swallowing blood until sated. (A wound from a lamprey will bleed at a rate of two hits/round for each round it was in place.)

Pike: The Pike is vicious, and is renowned as the shark of the freshwaters. It has a powerful jaw and wicked teeth, and once it has a hold it will not let go unless it is seriously wounded or it succeeds in biting off a healthy piece of its victim. (Note that, once bitten, a victim will not be attacked again, but they must roll an additional attack to knock the fish loose, with no mods for DB, armor etc.) The Pike will not normally attack a swimmer. This is particularly reassuring to the rivermen; Pike grow up to 7' long in the Onodló.

Sturgeon: The granddaddy of all fish, the Sturgeon grows up to 18' long in still waters. It is has a scaly skin, which protected by five rows of bony scutes along its sides. Normally very docile, one of these formidable creatures will only attack if its lair is disturbed. Then, it thrashes about angrily, perhaps ramming or upsetting any nearby river craft.

Wels: A species of giant catfish, the Wels is an ugly brute. They are usually up to 4-5' long, but sometimes reach 10'. A larger Wels weighs nearly 700 lbs. It has a rounded body with a flattened head and a wide, horizontal mouth, around which are 2 long sensory barbels and 4 short ones. It is known to swallow prey whole and will sometimes bash boats.

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Blue Terrapin: Blue Terrapin are only found in thickets or very dense, overgrown swamp areas. Their native home is Fangorn. Small, their shells average 18" across, but they have a 12" neck. Thus, a Blue Terrapin can strike like a snake, delivering a 2nd level muscle poison (with a Critical Strike) that can paralyze a small mammal (up to 40 lbs). If it bites a man, it will paralyze the area or limb it penetrates, partially paralyzing one adjacent area. The poison wears off in 3 hours.

Frogs & Toads: The Ethir Onodló contains many varieties of amphibians, including frogs and toads, and their close relatives: such as newts and salamanders. Some frogs are edible and hunted by children of the locality.

Marsh Adder: A large aquatic snake with mottled grey and brown scales, Marsh Adders are easily startled and bite with little provocation. Given a critical strike, it injects a 10th level muscle venom. Victims failing their RR by 51+ die in 5 rounds as a result of respiratory paralysis. Those failing by 1-50 contract flaccid paralysis and their joints go loose and immobile for 1-100 hours.

Natrix (Nathrach): The Natrix is another aquatic snake. Brown bands surround its rust-colored body, which typically measures 3-5' in length. These snakes only attack when their "runs" are encountered, and then it bites with astounding quickness. A Natrix's critical strike is accompanied by a 2nd level muscle poison that causes bleeding, bruises, and swelling (double all these effects on this and subsequent criticals). The venom is deliberately mild and is designed to stun small rodents before the snake envelops and crushes them. The Arnathrach, or Royal Natrix, is a much larger and rarer cousin that inhabits brackish waters.

SMALL CREATURES

Beetles: Among the myriad beetles and other insects with carapaces and six legs are the water boatmen, which swim along the surface of the water, and the great water beetle (or diving beetle), which grows 2" long.

Leech: While lauded for its medicinal qualities in some cultures, the leech is only considered a nuisance in the delta. These nasty, slug-like, water-dwelling creatures fasten to anything warm blooded and use their serrated tongue to rasp through to a blood vessel. Then they sit down and gorge themselves.

Mussels, Snails and other Shellfish: A lot of shellfish, many of them edible, live in the stiller waters of the delta. They are easy to collect, a task often assigned to children or the old, who use sharpened sticks and prongs, or nets for shrimps. Tastiest of all is the swan mussel, a large black-shelled bivalve with a creamy and orange-colored flesh.

Neekerbrecker: A very annoying insect, the Neekerbrecker is known in many of the worst swamps of Middle-earth. Gigantic relatives of the mosquito, these carnivores prefer solid meat. So, while it does not suck blood, a Neekerbrecker will appropriate small chunks of a man's flesh. Any wound inflicted by a neekerbrecker has a chance of being infected with Yellow Rheum, a 0 level illness.

Hummerhorn: Surely one of Endor's most vicious insects, the rare but often lethal Hummerhorn is the stuff of legend. Each weighs 6-8 lbs and has a razor sharp, pointed proboscis of chitin (transparent horn). It seeks to gore a victim to death, then feasting on the corpse with its three sets of mandibles. They resemble gigantic wasps, and their only failing is the unmistakable noise they make whenever they approach.

5.0 MONSTERS

THE VODYANOI

The Vodyanoi is a relative of the Giant Hellbender. It is an aquatic carnivore, but prefers the flesh of mammals, especially people, over all other treats. Growing up to 6' tall, it resembles a giant, black frog. It lurks in dank pools, below the water, ready to strike. Then the Vodyanoi either drags its prey into the water in order to drown it, or swallows the victim whole. Like a snake, it can dislocate its own jaw to swallow creatures larger than its mouth would normally allow. The Vodyanoi has huge eyes which it sometimes uses to distract and hypnotize its prey. (Anyone so affected must make a 5th level RR, adding any available Pr bonus.)

CORPSE CANDLES

This undead spirit can create the illusion of being a whole, healthy creature by cloaking the hideous remains of its once-living body. It lurks in

water and exudes a beckoning light that magically attracts its victims. Those seeing the glow must resist a 7th lvl spell; failure results in the victim falling into a deadly trance (4 pts CO are drained each round until death).

"He first saw one, a wisp of pale sheen that faded away; but others appeared soon after: some like dimly shining smoke, some like misty flames flickering slowly above unseen candles; here and there they twisted like ghostly sheets unfurled by hidden hands."

"In the pools when the candles were lit ... pale faces, deep deep under the dark water ... grim faces and evil, and nobles faces and sad. Many faces proud and fair, and weeds in their silver hair. But all foul, all rotting, all dead. A fell light is in them"

MEWLIPS

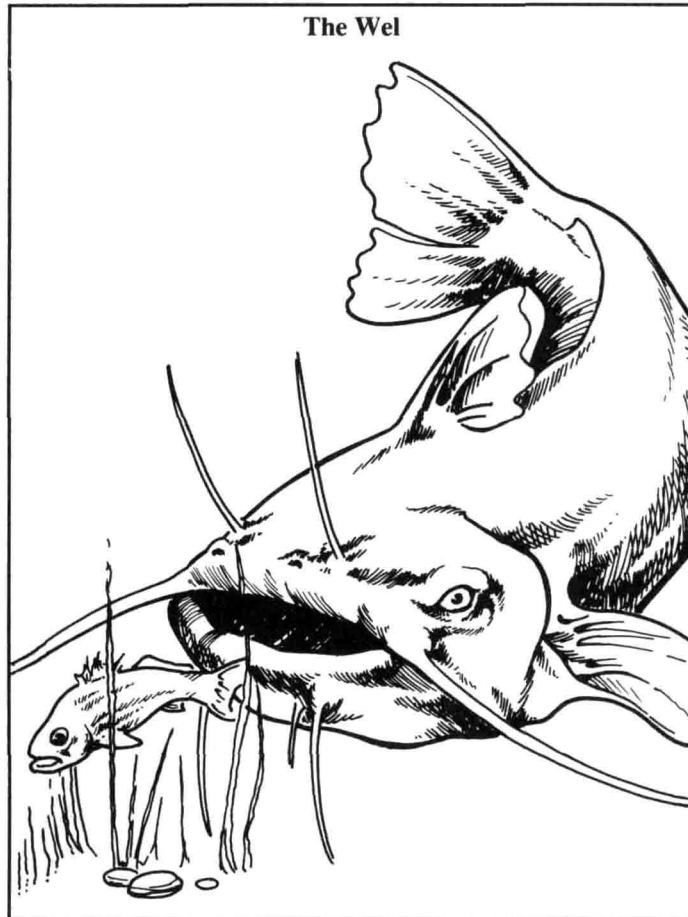
Mewlips (see the cover art) are an evil, semi-legendary race of exceedingly rare, cannibalistic spirits. Fond of the most noisome and darkest swamps and marshes, they have a silent tread and strangling hands, although they typically use jagged weapons of rusty steel or stone. They are deceptively human in appearance; but their backs are horribly hunched and their skin shines with a clammy, greenish-brown pallor. Even their ragged clothing is moist and foul.

Mewlips feed on most anything and they covet shiny objects, particularly things of gold. It is said that such items remind them of uncursed life, of the nature of beings who are not in the thrall of Darkness. Perhaps these tales are true, for Mewlips are perversions left behind by Morgoth, and they date to the Elder Days.

*"The shadows where the Mewlips dwell
Are dark and wet as ink,
And slow and softly rings their bell,
As in the slime you sink.
You sink into the slime, who dare
To knock upon their door,
While down the grinning gargoyles
And noisome waters pour."*

SWAMP STARS

Another variety of undead spirits, Swamp Stars appear as small, bright lights or Will-o'-the-Wisps. They attempt to lure victims into deep water, bogs, or quicksand using a 5th level spell of *Luring*. While the victim perishes, the Star drains 6 CO pts each round.



6.0 ADV. 1: WATER OF LIFE

A road crosses the Mering Stream by way of a wood and stone bridge close to the its confluence with the Ethir Onodló. Here a small town has grown up, which the masters of the two provinces (the warden of Anórien and the governor of Calenardhon) agreed would make an ideal site for a garrison and toll post. Mering Steps, as the town is called by locals, is most noted for its Customs Master, housed with the garrison in their small fortified house.

6.1 THE FIRIRNIN SMUGGLERS' TALE

The Customs Master is responsible for controlling the trade between the provinces and through the delta region. One of his current preoccupations is the amount of illegal Firimin (S. "Water of Life") being smuggled from the East Emnet through the delta to the Anduin, after which it is practically impossible to catch up with. The River Patrols have standing instructions to search any suspicious boat and the watch at Micandor's Tower constantly scans the marshes for signs of the law-breakers.



A few years ago a dark-haired man was captured off the coast of Belfalas on board a pirate vessel. He escaped just as the navy ship was entering Pelargir and stowed away on a trading boat. A week later he let himself off: his name was Ringór, and was a lesser Dúnadan who had found another place to work — the Ethir Onodló. Ringór had been a smuggler for fifteen years and knew just how to set about building a network of contacts through the marshes. He found suppliers and he found people with a demand. Recruiting some bandits after their leader and half his men were ambushed, he became, if not one of the biggest, then one of the best contrabandists in the delta. Naturally, he wasn't always successful and there was an inevitable turnover of members in his band. However, with a secure, secret hideout and a good knowledge of the ways of the Onodló's fens, they were outside the grasp of Amtaur the Customs Master.

Amtaur was not prepared to surrender easily. He had caught a few smugglers who wouldn't talk, except to spit Ringór's name in his face; so he obtained an agent in the governor's service, called Menezîr. The agent was successful, and after a month of slouching around town leaving a trail of vagrancy and theft he was picked up by Camberd, a tough middle-aged woman, an excellent crossbow shot and one of Ringór's trusted band. A

few weeks later he was living at their secret hideout and helping punt barrels through the hidden streams under the morning mists.

Menezîr hurried back to Mering Steps with the news. Amtaur quickly assembled the men of the garrison under Thalion, his lieutenant, and took a force of fifteen north by boat and horse to a camp on the south bank of the Onodló, just five miles from the smugglers' hideout. In the first light of morning he took the men on board and they paddled silently upstream to the Enn-Hîr.

Unfortunately, another smuggler, Taska, was in the process of leading a coracle down to the water to go hunting when the boats came creaking through the mists. He dashed back to the caves the band had made their home and woke the others. Panic took them and Ringór could not hold them back; they simply flew from the hideout this way and that, scattering in the hope that they could all escape. The Customs Master hurriedly ordered his men ashore and, as the mists rose, they gave chase where they could. Only two smugglers were caught nearby, Barolir and Vilnion, before the hunt had to be called off. Amtaur needed the special skills of the River Patrol to track them down, so he contented himself with sifting through the contents of the caves and removing anything of value. With the boats piled up, he sent a man upstream to contact the River Patrol and alert them to the smugglers' presence, then returned to his camp.

NOTE: *Within minutes of his arrival, unlooked-for tidings are brought by the characters.*

Of the nine (not counting Menezîr) smugglers, only six remain at liberty. Menezîr arrested Camberd in Mering Steps that morning, while Amtaur captured Barolir and Vilnion. The others fled in four directions. Fecandra and Lúvagar went north and then east, toward Forodló. Edorhil has gone east along the Nog Mennin in a punt, unseen by the guards. Taska has run northwest across country and became lost. Breorh and Ringór swam the Nog Mennin under cover of the mist and took a hidden punt through the Midden to the Vale, for Ringór realized who betrayed them. Now he intends to extract a long and very painful revenge from Menezîr.

6.2 THE NPCs

NOTE: *Some of the characters below have no notable items, language abilities, or skills. Thus, they are described without reference to any particular game data.*

6.21 THE GARRISON & THE TOWNSFOLK

ODONIL, THE STEWARD

Odonil is a boring, humorless man who keeps the Stewardry. He usually works through Rieldir; he himself has two servants to assist with the warehousing of goods taken in taxation. Odonil has little time for anyone or anything not connected with his business. He takes great offense if interrupted during working hours (dawn until two hours after noon). He is not a reasonable man, despite his claims otherwise.

THALION ARANROD, LIEUTENANT AT IMDORAD

Thalion is a young, somewhat indolent knight, the younger son of Lord Aranrod, a nobleman holding fiefs in Anórien east of Amon Dín. He might be said to be cooling his heels while waiting for his spurs, for Thalion sees the army as a fashionable and easy career to indulge in until his father passes on and he has the chance to inherit some money and move to a city. He puts little effort into his job, which the garrison men appreciate, even if Amtaur sometimes gets rather short-tempered. Outwardly, Thalion is usually charming and has few interests: he rides well and likes to practice jousting and other skills; he also reads a lot, and he is a good gambler.

NOTE: *Thalion's horsemanship skill gets a roll vs. MM, the result equaling the percentage increase in his Riding skill or Mounted Lance OB. Alternatively, he can add +35 (i.e., half his bonus) directly to Ride or Lance OB.*

Notable Skills: Horsemanship 69, Ride 67, Gambling 54, Literature 45, Perception 35, Swim 26. **Languages:** Adúnaic 5, Sindarin 5, Westron 5, Quenya 4, Old Adúnaic (read & write only) 2. **Notable Items:** Ring set with garnet, carnelian and bloodstone — stops up to 3 pts of bleeding from a single wound 5x/day, +10 shield of oak, helm with blue plume negates 50% of head criticals, 4 doses Kathkusa, 1 dose Klagul, "Ranil" — trained horse giving +20 to all maneuver rolls on horseback.

ERKAM, GARRISON SERGEANT

Erkam runs the garrison on a day-to-day basis, organizing everything from drill for the men to supplies for the cook. He is efficient and likes his position, which is why he has stayed on despite advancing years. Erkam is well liked by both the guardsmen and the townsfolk. Like all senior guardsmen he wears mail and carries a broadsword (anket) and large shield.

Notable Skills: Ride 44, Perception 40, Armorer's Craft 35, Swim 29, Command 25, Stalk/Hide 25. **Languages:** Westron 4, Sindarin 3. **Notable Items:** Copper Ring +15 RR vs Disease, +5 (non-magical) anket.

TYPICAL GUARDSMAN

There are thirty men-at-arms garrisoned at Mering Steps, another eighteen at Fen's Edge, and twelve more in Micandor's Tower. Their duties are rotated, so everyone spends time in each location. Guardsmen are organized into groups of five for long range patrols: all the men are mounted, there being two archers and three lancers. Short range patrols — for example, the watch in Mering Steps — are undertaken in pairs on foot. Men are normally equipped with mail and shields with a cap helm; they bear longswords (anketa) and shortwords (eketa) as well as their speciality weapon (e.g., crossbow or mounted lance/spear).

Notable Skills: Ride 30, Swim 25, Perception 20, Stalk/Hide 15.

AMTAUR "NIMPHIN," THE CUSTOMS MASTER

Amtaur, nicknamed "White-hair," is in his late forties. Born a free man of Calmierië, he joined the Army and served with the border guard and patrols, so he knows the area moderately well. He proved a competent soldier and developed ambitions in local politics. After becoming a roquen, he was appointed to the post of Customs Master in Imdorad five years ago. Amtaur has since gone prematurely white, an unusual thing among the men of Gondor.



Amtaur is a very good organizer and is both forceful and brave, but he has a lackluster staff and he is not always good at delegating duties. Never slow to keep his men in line, he often makes them resentful. Nonetheless, they respect him, since he has skills in administration (which includes record and bookkeeping, budgeting, planning, etc.), as well as military tactics. His hobby is hawking and he has had a mews built onto the stewardry on the edge of town, so that he can practice when he wishes.

Notable Skills: Ride 61, Administration 59, Hawking 57, Military Tactics 45, Swim 41, Perception 45, Stalk/Hide 35, Track 34. **Languages:** Westron 5, Adûnaic 5, Sindarin 4, Quenya 2. **Notable Items:** +10 scale armor (as chain, made of bronze), +10 bastard sword (can be used 1 or 2 handed) with Water Finding 4x/day.

RIELDIR, CLERK TO THE CUSTOMS MASTER

Rieldir and his staff of three clerks work for Amtaur in his civil service capacity, checking on the daily collections of tolls and duty, sometimes assisted by the guardsmen. They are all expert book-keepers and scribes as well as being assayers, able to estimate the value of all sorts of goods, from livestock to craftware. Rieldir is elderly and balding, with a pious air of devotion to his job. He is certainly assiduous and has few interests outside of the garrison house, his home, and office.

MIENA, KING'S CROWN INN

Miena trained as a pastry cook, and then married Siobal, who owned the Inn. She inherited the establishment after he died in the Plague and has maintained it as the only decent place to stay in town. She is fairly tall, with a broad chest and strong arms, has a generous and generally happy disposition, and enjoys a good gossip. She also knows how to brew excellent beer.

VIRLOCH & BETHLAM, THE WATERMILL

Virloch and Bethlam are middle-aged business partners. Virloch is a brawny man, mostly quiet and traditionally minded. He sold half his business thirty years ago having only just managed to set himself up (and almost going bankrupt), and since then Bethlam has been a staunch supporter. He works the watermill grinding grain for locals and traders. Bethlam, a woman with an engaging nature if rather plain looking, has a keen mind and expanded the business to include a water-powered loom which she now runs.

VINIË CARAMACH

Vinië is a dissolute man of few cares. He is negligent about his appearance or living habits, he does not care what other people think of him, and he does not care where his money comes from. He runs a cheap and dubious hostel and attracts all the worst elements of the town, from nightsingers (harlots) to dealers in stolen and illicit goods. Few people openly associate with Vinië, but there is little the Customs Master can do to him. (Such people are hard to prosecute and Vinië keeps a low profile.)

URUIWEN, THE TENDANT

Uruiwen was first a clever seamstress, then a successful cloth trader. She remains a spinster but adopted her sister's three children after their mother and father were killed in a bandit attack across the Anduin five years ago. She is intelligent, knows how to make money and has a good reputation for honesty. All these factors secured the Tendanship from the former occupant of the post and Amtaur approves. Uruiwen sold her business and now devotes all her time to encouraging other trade and handing the tasks of a local civil magistrate.

CORMACAR THE RANGER

Cormacar is not a man of Imdorad, but hails from Twyferry, the son of its Warden, Sarvelich. He is a doughty and helpful chap, a good judge of character, and a valuable ally. He has trained himself in many skills useful to those who travel the marsh ways, and is always willing to lend a hand or join a party looking for adventure. He has short reddish hair, sparkling green-brown eyes, and a tanned skin; he dresses in earthy and dull green colors.

Notable Skills: Ride 62, Foraging 60, Perception 58, Star-gazing 50, Disarm Traps 45, Swim 42, Track 42, Watercraft 40, Stalk/Hide 33. **Languages:** Westron 4, Sindarin 3, Nínelen 3, Bethleur 2. **Spell Lists:** Path Mastery, Surface Ways. **Notable Items:** Alder Staff +1 spell adder; Iron Dagger detects north 1x/hour; Mirror of Opals with Projected Light 4x/day at 8th level.

6.22 THE SMUGGLERS

EDORHIL

Edorhil was a hunter of Tillais, a now-abandoned village which ravaged by the Plague until those few remaining fled and left it to rot in the marsh. He had previously been a poor-to-adequate hunter, so he decided to stop troubling himself to earn a living and joined up with some bandits. Later, when most had been wiped out after guard patrols got stiffer, he joined Ringór's band. He is still a good trapper and supplied the band with fresh game from various traps and snares. Edorhil has long light brown hair tied back with a thong and a pock-marked face. His skin is somewhat sallow.

Notable Skills: *Stalk/Hide 41, Trap-building 40, Skinning & Butchery 35, Swim 33, Perception 29, Disarm Traps 21, Ambush <5 ranks>.* **Languages:** *Westron 4.* **Notable Items:** *3 snares, 3 spring-type traps, blue silk scarf with Waterlungs 1x/day when folded and tied around lower face.*

TASKA

Taska was born of an Easterling (Asdriag) mother and Gondorian father in southern Rhovanion. His mother was a slave taken in battle against the Asdriags and was badly used by her master, the chief servant or steward of a retired soldier-farmer. She sent her son away to her tribe at the first opportunity. Twelve years later, Taska returned, and one night slew the man who was his father, at the same time freeing his mother from her bonds. Then he was forced to flee westward, despite his dread of the wetlands. Desperate, and floundering through the marsh, he came across Camberd struggling with a water snake and came to her rescue. He was taken back to the hideout and immediately joined Ringór's band. He still knows little about the area and retains a savage and dangerous personality, governed by few principles.

Notable Skills: *Horse-training 35, Leatherworking 35, Ride 32, Perception 25, Swim -13.* **Languages:** *Asdriag 4, Westron 3.* **Notable Items:** *2 gold armbands each worth 25gp, yurgas, blunt knife (-10 OB).*

BREORH

Breorh is a young Northman, little more than a lad, tall and handsome. He despises his homeland (and all rural types) and instead seeks position and money in a town. Naive and not very brave, he always seeks to impress Ringór and has stayed especially close to him through this debacle.

Breorh was trained to ride well and had a brief affair with a girl from Woodmen-town before leaving. He still carries a totem she gave him, which was carved by a wise man of the town from maplewood and bears the likeness of a squirrel.

Notable Skills: *Lifting 70, Ride 55, Public-Speaking 30, Stalk/Hide 20, Perception 20, Swim 8.* **Languages:** *Eothrik 4, Westron 4, Nahaiduk 2, Sagathig 2.* **Notable Items:** *Woodman Totem with Animal Tongues 1x/day.*

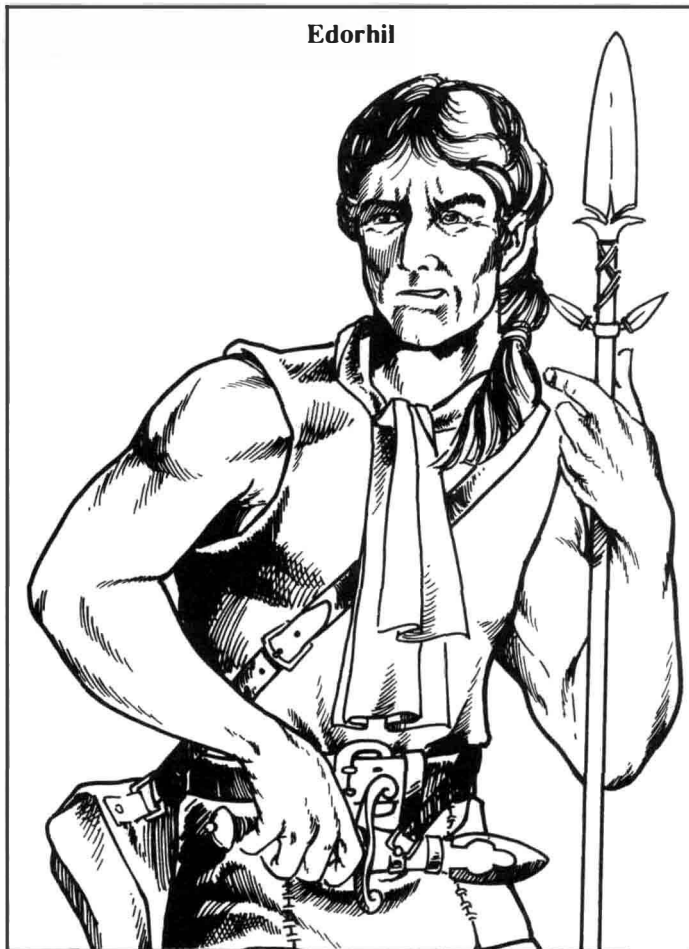
RINGÓR

Ringór is a dark haired lesser Dúnadan from some long-forgotten inner province of Gondor. A poor, simple household servant for many years, he became a thief but was quickly caught and imprisoned. He languished in jail for a year or two and emerged determined and wise. After spending some time smuggling on the coast and teaming up with pirates, he eventually came to the Ethir Onodló. Now he knows his way around the marsh and surrounding lands very well.

Ringór is alert and cunning, with an evil mind and a penchant for cruelty. Very handy with a knife and full of dirty tricks, he is also adept in all manner of travelling skills (e.g., boat, bogshoes, riding, etc.).

Notable Skills: *Stalk/Hide 80, Pick Lock 55, Perception 55, Boat/Water Travel 55, Track 55, Swim 45, Ride 40, Bribery 35, Read Runes 30, Disarm Traps 20, Base Spells 0.* **Languages:** *Adúnaic 5, Westron 5, Sindarin 3, Quenya 1, Haradaic 2, Sagathig 2.* **Spell List:** *Essence Hand.* **Notable Items:** *Belt with silver clasp acts as Protection 14x/day, +10 crossbow, 3 special quarrels (all +10): (i) NET — if critical scored add another critical on Grappling Critical Table of one degree higher; (ii) BOLT — if critical scored add another critical as if Shock Bolt; (iii) STUNNING — affects any target struck as Stun Song at 10th level.*

Edorhil



FECANDRA

Fecandra and her husband Lúvador originally dwelt under the eaves of the Taur-nan-Anwar. Fecandra had some knowledge of herbs and healing and got involved supplying herbs to a group of smugglers. She began seeking out the more exotic and rare herbs they were most interested in, and soon discovered what a goldpiece was. The smugglers were careless and soon Fecandra and Lúvador had to flee north. Eventually he fell in with Ringór and Fecandra allowed herself to be persuaded to join this new band. She has been smuggling for some years now, and continues collecting herbs. She is also proficient at handling boats.

Notable Skills: *Use Herbs 55, Herb Lore 50, Perception 44, Swim 34, Stalk/Hide 34, Rowing 25, Ride 24, Use Items 24, Base Spells 4.* **Languages:** *Westron 4, Sindarin 4, Adúnaic 1.* **Notable Items:** *jewelled necklace (300gp), +5 dagger with silver hilt and blade poisoned with Blade Hemlock (6th level poison causing spasms which incapacitate, or kill if RR failed by 26+), familiar: otter called "Elanta" (S. "Falling Star").*

LÚVADOR

Lúvador is a Rural Man, a former forester, married to Fecandra. He is rather lazy and will always seek the easiest way out. He is also greedy, and was responsible for them being almost caught when his wife was smuggling herbs and drugs along the road to Minas Anor. He is a good archer and has a special forester's bow (+10 longbow) as well as his own arrows. Lúvador stands moderately tall for a common man, 6' 2", but is neither heavily built nor strong. He has straggly, mid-length brown hair and dull eyes.

Notable Skills: *Forage 40, Perception 36, Stalk/Hide 36, Track 29, Swim 29, Fletching 20.* **Languages:** *Westron 4.* **Notable Items:** *Forester's Bow, stone of Storm Prediction 1x/day.*

6.3 LAYOUT OF MERING STEPS

1. The Bridge. The Mering Steps are actually the piles of stone which support a wooden bridge. There are five piles under this bridge of six spans. The piles have survived a number of very severe floods, even when the wooden parts of the Steps have been swept away, and it is thanks to the bridge that the town remains as thriving as it is today. The middle course is quite high, allowing most boats through with ease to the quays on the north bank upstream of the bridge.

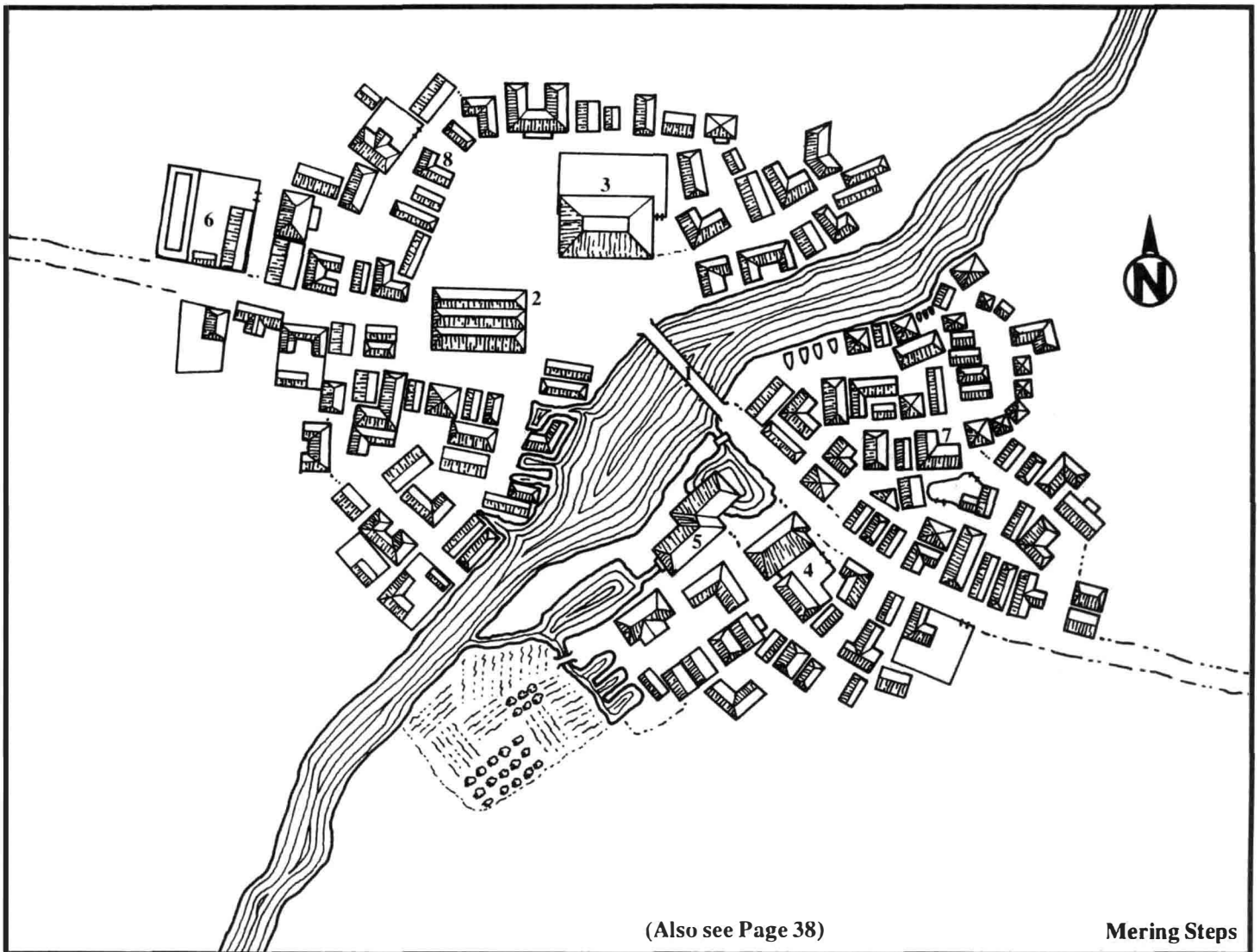
2. Market Place. This large area for trading has a central covered market: a thatched roof raised on sturdy wooden pillars, covering a rectangle 120' by 70'. Beneath it there are a number of fixed pitches and others rented from the market's Tendant, currently Uruwen. These covered pitches and other stalls around the market sell fresh fruit and vegetables, freshly caught fish, meat, poultry and game, bread, pies and other cooked foods, household wares, cloth, yarn and thread, woodcut books and stationery, trinkets, jewellery, and a selection of other simple luxuries, such as wines and spices.

3. Garrison House. The garrison house is a large semi-fortified building of stone, situated at the highest point in town, on the north side of the Market Place. The building is rectangular and encloses a narrow inner yard. There is also a large outer courtyard used by the men-at-arms for drill instruction and weapons training. Quite comfortable, the garrison house is home to these men-at-arms and their Lieutenant, Thalio Arnod. Amtaur, the Customs Master, also resides here, along with his staff of Clerks (under Rieldir). Five guards share a room between them and

Rieldir, Thalio, and Amtaur all have their own rooms. The structure contains a mess hall, a kitchen, servants' quarters, storehouse, workshop and armory, with sufficient equipment not only for the men of the garrison but also for the levy of townsmen who might be called upon to defend the area. Finally, the garrison house has a cellar with prison cells where local malefactors are incarcerated, supervised by Erkam the sergeant.

4. King's Crown Inn. Run by Miena, a decent goodwife of the town who was once employed in Flaxen's Bakery. She now owns both the inn, which has a yard and stable attached and twelve rooms upstairs, and also the White Tree Brewery on Boat Street. Miena charges moderate prices and offers the only good, clean, fresh rooms in town. The food is also excellent value and heartily served. Horses may be hired from here on a weekly basis. Many townsfolk gather to drink here in the evening.

5. Watermill. The watermill is a large building of timber with a lower course of stone. It operates from a small head of water built up in the dammed millpond behind it. (Beside it stands the house of Virloch and Bethlam, the two owners.) The water is used twice, powering first a millstone for grinding corn, then dividing into three streams to work a trio of looms. The weaving house is an extension of the original mill and is entirely wooden, supported on stilts over the outflow pool which drains through a sluice back into the Mering Stream. A number of local people are employed in both businesses. The millpond also has an offshoot that feeds three pools for the growing of watercress; these and the gardens beyond are cultivated by three families of gardeners who help keep the town supplied with fresh fruit and vegetables all year round. Other produce comes from nearby farms and orchards.



(Also see Page 38)

Mering Steps

6. Stewardry. Two large barns are joined by a small and cramped house, the home of Odonil the Steward and his servants. The barns are in part lined with well-ordered shelves and otherwise stacked neatly with crates, boxes, casks, barrels, sacks and bags of all sorts of produce taken in tax or duty. Gold and silver paid is kept in the vaults of the garrison house. The north end of the larger barn is a stable housing the forty steeds of the garrison, also used by the King's messengers and the Haste Post.

7. Vinië's Hostel. Vinië operates a filthy, unkempt hostel. His rooms are cheap, though, and used by passing bargemen, lightermen, fishers, hunters, and poor traders. It is also the center for much larceny in the town, with at least one fence, band of thugs and pickpocket to be found at any given time. There are three common rooms sleeping up to 8 people and six smaller rooms for single or double occupancy. As for food, only breakfast, a thin gruel, stale bread and watery beer, and soup at evening are available. The hostel also sells two sorts of ale and one spirit.

8. Tendant's House. This stone townhouse goes with the position of Tendant, overseer of the market and local civil magistrate. Currently Uruwen is Tendant. She is unmarried and occupies the house with her servants; during the day she may be found at the Town Hall.

6.4 GENERAL SITES OF INTEREST

The Ethir Onodló is filled with interesting sites. Many are little more than rotting ruins, the remnants of abandoned homes and villages, but a few offer enticing opportunities for adventure.

SMUGGLER'S HIDEOUT

The hideout (1) is located on Tol Britha (S. "Sandy Island", Breckisle), sandy and gravelly flats between the first divided channels of the Onodló. The isle is frequently flooded (but only shallowly) and years of alluvial deposits have produced dune-banks 10'-30' high stretching sometimes for miles. One of these britheiyd (S. "Sandbanks") overlooks the Nog Mennin, and in a concealed fold the smugglers have delved a couple of dry caves. One already existed, a legacy of the Stoors who once lived on Breckisle.

a. Kitchen & Peat Store. In this small room are stacked supplies of food, kindling, and peat. Fecandra has a very good relationship with a widow of Forodló thanks to her healing skills, and they obtain supplies through her. In this room are sacks, a few boxes and crates and a large rack stacked at the top with vegetables and cured meat, and at the bottom with flagons of wine and ale. There are also some large utensils, such as a cauldron, spit etc. kept here when not in use.

b. Dayroom. The all-purpose room is the largest in the cave. A curtain of hides either cuts off the passage outside or the inner rooms — the latter

being necessary when something noxious is cooking. There is a hearth and several mattresses of cotton stuffed with straw. Some rather tatty furs give them a semblance of comfort. The room is lit with rushlights around the walls. Barolir, Vilnion, Breorh, and Menezîr all slept here at night and each had a chest or leather box of belongings, but these have been tipped out and everything valuable taken. Beside the hearth all manner of pots, knives etc. are stacked. A small cauldron of porridge is spilt on the floor.

c. Sleeping Room. Private room shared by Camberd, Lúvagar, and Fecandra. There are two rushlights and a number of alcoves carved into the walls which support shelves. These had a number of books, ornaments and other items, but have either been taken by the guards or flung to the rush-strewn floor. A full chamber pot sits in one corner; under it is a concealed hole, covered with a round wooden lid, which is Very Hard (-20) to spot. In the hole are four pouches of herbs: 2 doses of Zaganzar (poison), 1 dose Belramba, 3 doses Megillos and 3 Ur nuts. There is also a flagon of brewed Thurl but it is imperfectly prepared and will affect non-Men as a 5th level poison, doing 1-50 hits. It contains 6 doses.

d. Sleeping Room. Another private room shared by Ringór, Edorhil and Taska. Aside from the mattresses, furs and blankets there are some chests of clothing and other gear. The largest chest has been jemmied open by the guards and the smugglers' "treasury" taken; however Ringór had a false top made for the chest in which there are another 80gp concealed (Extremely Hard (-30) to spot). However, the secret compartment is trapped with a sprung garotte wire (very fine and sharp) — opening the flap unawares gives 3 x 1-6 hits, with each "6" rolled indicating bleeding at 1 hit/rnd thereafter. If 12+ hits are done, the opener's hand has a penalty of -40 on all activity.

e. Store. This room was stacked with "trade" goods, including a few furs and skins, all bundled into sacks. Mostly there were barrels of spirits, wine and ale all being smuggled to Anórien avoiding the Customs men and their duty — a tax currently standing at 10gp a barrel on Firimin (S. "Liquor"). The wine and ale casks have all been staved in, the spirits taken away with the furs. The room was also used to store tools for carpentry, boatmending, fletching, leatherworking, skinning, racks for drying herbs and so on.

BY THE RIVER

A path leads from the caves down to the riverbank where, concealed by tall stands of dock and other water plants, were several punts, a skiff and two coracles. It is possible to deduce that one skiff and two punts have gone from here: the skiff taken by Fecandra and Lúvagar, one punt by Edorhil, and the other by the guards (to ferry back the flagons and other goods taken from the caves). This latter punt was the only good one, for the smugglers scuttled the boats mentioned above; all will sink in 6-10 rounds if put onto the water. Any of them could be repaired (using the tools in e.) in 2-4 hrs.

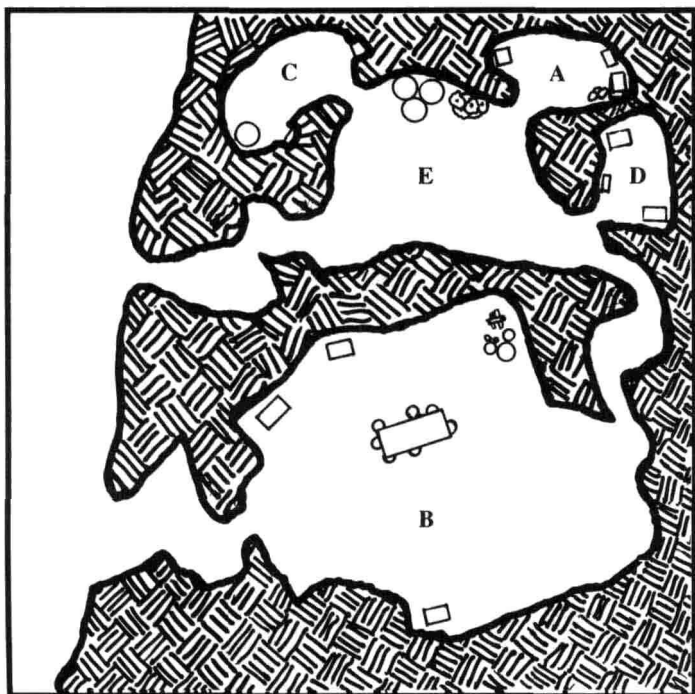
A skiff has one pair of oars and can hold up to four people (with minimal baggage). A punt is poled along and has room for two. A coracle is propelled with a single paddle and will overbalance with more than one person.

Clues: A search for tracks will reveal much confusion around the water's edge, but no real information. On the north side of the dune into which the hideout is burrowed are Taska's tracks (Medium (+0) to discover and follow). If the south bank of the Nog Mennin is searched, signs of 1-2 men (Breorh & Ringór) coming ashore from the water may be found (Hard (-10) to discover).

BRECKISLE (TOL BRITHA)

Breckisle, or Tol Britha, is a flat, poorly-covered land with strange, rounded, long dunes (britheiyd). Tough grasses and prickly shrubs grow on the low-lying areas, while on the dunes the grass is broader and thicker, a greenish-purple, and other plants flourish such as cottongrass, goatsbeard, greenweed, bilberry and even some wizened alders. There are some semi-wild sheep, a few snakes and lizards, and small rodents. No people live here. Occasionally there are patches of treacherous quicksand in depressions; during the day, these are easily recognized and avoided as they are covered with lusher plants.

NOTE: Encountering quicksand requires a Hard MM roll as the victim struggles out. Any result of less than 100 means they sink (to a depth of 100-result inches). Then another roll should be made. Anyone able to help them out (with a pole, spear butt, branch etc.) can add a +10 and ST bonus to the victim's MM bonus.



In one or two of the britheiyd are long-abandoned Hobbit-holes, which were dug by early Stoor settlers. They are typically T-shaped with rooms dug out at each branch of the "T." Such holes contain only flood debris, animal droppings and perhaps a few Pond Bats.

THE MIDDEN (MEDENNIN)

Despite its name, the Midden is not especially rank or foul-smelling. It is divided in two by the Enn-Hîr, in this stretch designated the Nog Mennin. On the south bank a strong levee has broken up and is reinforced by the King's dredgers. A slope of some 15' leads down to the little-moving waters and creeks which drain into Midden Lake (Loeg Medennin), a patch of open water about 2 miles long and half a mile across. Midden Lake is shunned as the adode of Vodyanoi. Two miles south of it is Bowater (Lin Lúva), one of the main breeding grounds for cranes and grebes. The Bowater is a clear and relatively clean stretch of water once the course of the river and now abandoned to slowly silt up.

Vegetation here is often thick with tall irises, bell-rushes, reeds and horsetails hung about with mosses and lichen, and much undergrowth. The waters are home to many small fish and pike. Bowater is sometimes plagued with lampreys, and all the streams have a good population of leeches.

North of the Nog Mennin, the marsh proper is narrower and criss-crossed by streams that exchange water between the two major channels. The marshes are almost wholly waterlogged with no dry land, but there is little tall vegetation and the plants are thick enough to walk on in bogshoes.

The streams here are often plied by duck hunters and reed-cutters who seek the smaller, thinner, lighter reeds. There are many fish, herons and other fishers here, as well as otters and a few mink.

VALE OF ENTWASH

The Vale of Entwash extends south of the Ethir Onodló. Here, rolling plains gently rise through Calenardhon and Anórien all the way to the White Mountains. The land is sparsely farmed, with typical landowners maintaining large homesteads surrounded by a few arable fields and plenty of wide-ranging pasturelands. It is a good land to raise horses and sheep or cattle. Close to the delta the ground is too damp for growing grain so root crops such as beet and potatoes are raised.

There are no walls or fences in the Vale, but boundary stones mark out the land to guide herders. Dotted around are low stone huts with turf rooves known as shielings. Usually built against a bank, the shielings are built for a shepherd to shelter with his flock or a foaling mare.

The land north of the delta is much the same, but there are even fewer farms. These are generally given over to herding, although there are a number of farm gardens in this area.

6.5 THE SMUGGLERS' FLIGHT

The following material documents the various escape routes taken by the bandits. These journeys can, of course, be interrupted at any time by the player characters, or any other encounter for that matter

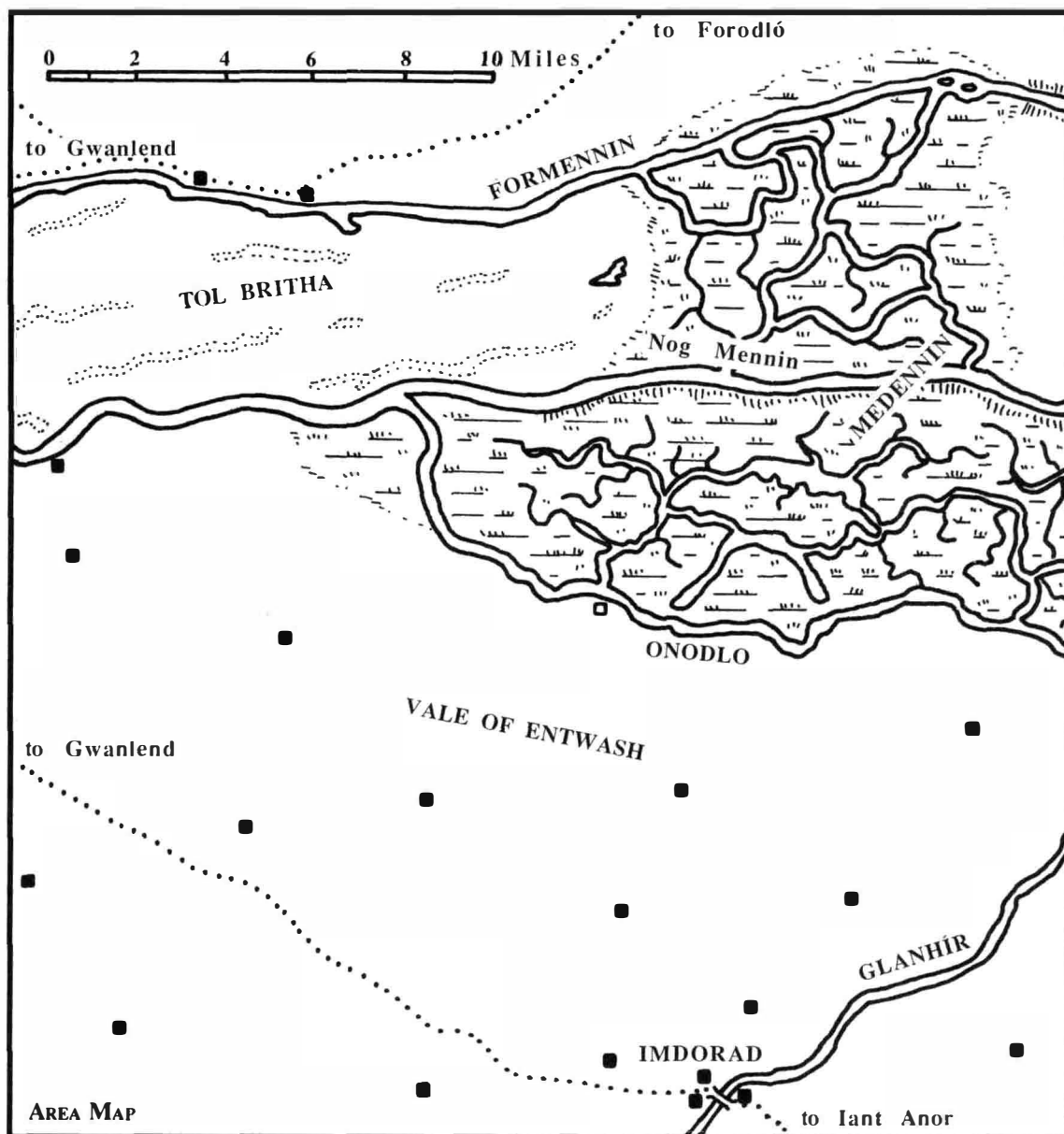
6.51 FECANDRA'S & LÚVAGOR'S ROUTE

Upon hearing the alarm, Fecandra and Lúvagor hurriedly gather a few vital things and dash for the boats. Fecandra takes a skiff while Lúvagor runs along the cover of the tall reeds and meets her downstream. Fecandra knows the currents well, and she floats along the Nog-Mennin silently until she passes out of the guards' earshot. She picks her husband up and rows with all her might to the Midden, taking the first channel through the swamp.

NOTE: *By the time the characters meet with Amtaur, the couple are within reach of Forodló.*

In the village they meet Núneth, a widow who owns a small flock of sheep and herds them across the river from the houses. Her lands are poor but the sheep are sufficient for her to survive, and Fecandra sees to it that she is well rewarded for supplying the band. Núneth arranges for the couple to lie low in one of her shielings, close to the edge of the Midden.

NOTE: *In a week's time there will be a fur merchant of dubious reputation coming through the village on his twice annual trip to Osgiliath and he can spirit them away.*



Lúvagar and Fecandra make their way to the shieling (2) with some food and begin waiting out the week there. Now they repose. Fecandra stays mostly inside but Lúvagar easily gets tired and often strolls around outside, even indulging in a little hunting.

The shieling is built of peat and turfed over, making it difficult to spot, especially from the north or east. There is a single entrance and one window-cum-chimney.

6.52 EDORHIL'S ROUTE

Edorhil is rather insecure and relies on the leadership of others. He is, however, the first to escape and takes a punt, thinking it will be the quietest mode of travel. However, he realizes it isn't the best means for covering a long distance, so he tries to work out how to lay his hands on another craft. He poles his way down to the Midden, being overtaken by Fecandra, from whom he hides until it is too late to hail her. He follows her into the marsh and then decides he will never catch her and that hiding in the marsh would be better.

The first night is not too bad but he is hungry and cold. He moves on a little way, sets traps, and catches some food. He lights a fire to cook the flesh and only afterwards realizes that the smoke will give him away, so he moves on again. After another two days like this, he settles on a plan: to slip aboard a passing small craft and either kill the occupants and take it for himself, or else hide aboard it until out of the delta. Edorhil figures that, if anyone disturbs him during this time, he will set some traps and move on, hoping to disable them or put them off the chase.

On the fifth day, Edorhil abandons the punt (3) and goes down to the Nog Mennin with all his gear, being prepared to swim out to the first suitable boat.

NOTE: *Unless the characters come along earlier, he will spot a grain or wool barge late in the day and creep on board. He passes that night successfully at Micandor's Tower. The next day he will be out of the delta.*

6.53 TASKA'S ROUTE

Taska is the least-suited of the smugglers to lone flight through the delta. He heads away from the horrible wet swamps, across Breckisle. His leaves a trail which is not difficult to find and follow; however it loops and turns frequently, for the Easterling blunders his way from brithaudh to brithaudh trying to use all the available cover.

Taska has a vague plan to reach the North Channel then follow it along heading for Twyferry. Most of all, he wants the chance to confront anyone chasing him. He is armed with a sling and fifteen stones, a blunt knife, and his yurgas (a short stabbing spear which may be used one- or two-handed).

After a couple of days, Taska gets bored with a diet of roots, berries and the scraps of cold meat he grabbed on leaving the caves; so he kills a sheep and cuts out the best meat, leaving the carcass for scavengers (4). Then he camps in a thicket atop the brithaudh close by, and he builds a fire to cook some meat and smoke the rest to preserve it a few days.

NOTE: *Eight days after the raid, Taska makes his way to the westernmost point of Breckisle and attempts to swim across to the north bank, leaving his armor behind. Unfortunately, he is attacked by a water snake and drowns. His body spends the next two days floating through the delta before being washed ashore near Mitham.*

6.54 RINGÓR & BREORH'S ROUTE

In the split second of understanding his betrayal, Ringór knew what he had to do. Only Menezîr could have been responsible for this raid on his, Ringór's, successful band of smugglers, the band that had defied the Customs Master for three years. Menezîr would pay for his treachery, and pay dearly.

Ringór reasons that Menezîr had to be Amtaur's man. This being the case, Ringór resolved that the traitor would be in Mering Steps, waiting to gloat over the captives and identify them for the Master. Well, he would have a surprise in store! First, however, Ringór had to escape immediate detection. While the others headed for boats or ran for cover on Breckisle, Ringór runs west a short way and then swims across the river. To his surprise, he realizes that Breorh is with him. He hopes that the young lad won't spoil his chance of escape or revenge.

Within two hours he locates his secret punt on a creek of the Midden. With this, he and Breorh make their way stealthily through the waters of the swamp, taking a southward branch towards the Onodló. At one point, they are attacked by a stray Vodyanoi and Breorh leaps into the water to fight it, the water being fortunately shallow enough to enable him to use some leverage and drive the beast off.

NOTES: *Despite this victory, though, Ringór was injured in the attack, and he still nurses several nasty wounds. Signs of this recent struggle may be spotted by later passers-by.*

Once they reached the Onodló, the pair wait until the next day, hiding in the edge of the swamp. Then they cross in the early morning and hide the punt amid some wild galasenin, where a small creek enters the river between a stand of willows. (The punt sinks below the water, becoming very hard to spot.) They make their way out into the pastureland and head for a small hut, hoping to find some food when they are surprised by a horse-herder. Ringór shoots the man and they hide him in the hut and lay low the rest of the day, but at least they have plenty of food and drink.



The next morning they steal two of the horses and ride for Mering Steps, taking woollen cloaks and hoods to disguise themselves. They arrive in the afternoon and in the evening track Menezîr down to Vinië's hostel, where he is having a farewell drink with some local ruffians. There is a showdown and Menezîr is beaten up and carried off; the locals believing the affair to be just a typical fight and not intervening. Ringór and Breorh take the road east and south from Mering Steps, stopping off at a disused barn to torture Menezîr, who they leave hanging from a beam. (The signs of their handiwork serve as a warning to others, for the rope passes through the tendons of Menezîr's heels, leaving numerous slowly-bleeding cuts.) The next day they head across country, heading for the Anduin and a crossing to Ithilien.

NOTE: *After a few days they will be too far away for the characters to reach them and will pass out of this adventure; however, you could have them meet up later, especially if other smugglers were caught by them and Ringór wants to avenge those deaths as well. (Naturally, Amtaur will hang all those captured.)*

6.6 THE TASK

The task for the player characters in this adventure is to capture as many of the escaped criminals as possible while redeeming themselves in the eyes of the law. Recovering more than one or two of the smugglers will prove difficult to a slow party, since the criminals have gone off in different directions; but with care the characters should be able to achieve good results.

6.61 STARTING THE PLAYERS

There are, of course, numerous options for getting the players involved in this adventure. One involves a simple bounty, with the characters being offered a reward, or headprice, for capturing or slaying the smugglers. Another option might involve the characters coming across one of the smugglers at some earlier time. In such a case, the smuggler might have created a cause for revenge, say having stolen something from the characters or one of their allies.

Yet another involves the characters being apprehended by the local watch in Mering Steps. In this scenario, they are guilty of some minor misdemeanor e.g., trespassing on someone's land or brawling, or perhaps drunk and disorderly conduct. Hauled off to the garrison house, they are put under the guard of Erkam, a friendly, older man who tells them that they'll probably get off with a warning or a fine, but they'll have to wait until the Master returns as the civil magistrate isn't around.

NOTE: *Regardless of the scenario, though, Erkam will be involved in assisting with the apprehension of the smugglers. So, if the players hear rumors of an immediate local need for trackers and inquire about the figure in charge, they will be directed to Erkam.*

While the characters are waiting, a rider named Merisan arrives at the garrison house having galloped all the way from Sunbridge, nigh on one hundred and fifty miles away. He has changed horses twice on the way and it has taken him a whole day. Merisan reports directly and immediately to Erkam, so the characters can't help overhearing what he says:

"There's a body of Orkish troops crossed the Anduin in secret, from Mirkwood, and they're attacking the garrison at Fen's Edge. They slaughtered a number of fishermen and the garrison is besieged. The Warden at Sunbridge is raising his levy and knows that Amtaur has men with boats... They'll be needed, but it's the trained soldiers that are most in demand."

Erkam is alarmed. He only has a handful of men here, and they will be needed to start readying rivercraft and calling out the local militia. He turns to the characters and says:

"Look, I'm prepared to let you off if you can perform a public service. Take a message to the lieutenant and Master for me. Do you want horses? Head just west of north when you leave the town on the west bank, 'til you reach the Entwash, then follow its bank upstream (west, that is) until you hit their camp. It's Amtaur, Customs Master of Imdorad you want to speak to."

Erkam dictates a short message to a clerk and sketches a map for the characters on its reverse. Then he sees them off and his own men about their business as soon as possible.

The camp is about sixteen miles away (along the route described above). At a reasonable pace, it will take the characters two hours (requiring one Riding roll each) to four hours (and no riding roll) to reach. Amtaur and Thalion have just returned to the camp, annoyed by the smugglers' flight, and they are about to organize a few search parties to join up with River Patrols.

When he receives the message from Erkam, Amtaur will quickly think the situation over. Sizing the characters up, he will then offer them a bounty of 100gp per head for the smugglers, with a bonus 100gp for the leader. He will supply the characters with descriptions given by Menezir. Subsequently, Amtaur then ride off with five men and the prisoners, leaving Thalion to organize the rest. They are to break camp and board rowboats, then meet the Master at the confluence of the Mering Stream.

Thalion can let the characters borrow a boat, and their steeds can be left at the camp (they must be left there if supplied by Erkam). The full story of the attack on the smugglers' hideout and its location is best extracted from an ordinary guard, as Thalion will be too busy.

6.62 AIDS

The player characters will be very much on their own in this adventure. Thalion cannot spare any men to accompany them, so they will have to face the dangers of the marshes and the threat posed by the smugglers alone.

Erkam and Thalion will give them assistance with transport (horses, a boat, etc.), as explained above. One of the men accompanying Thalion has a good map of the area, and if the characters find this out, they might bribe him to sell it to them. On it are marked all navigable channels, although some will have shifted since the map was drawn.

Back in Mering Steps, should the characters return to the town (perhaps on the trail of Ringór), there will be three men left to man the garrison house. Note that there will also be many fewer male adults around than usual, as the militia levy has gone off with Amtaur to fight the Orc-band.

Finally, if the party seems unable to complete its task, they might be rescued or joined by Cormacar the Ranger (see NPCs). Cormacar has a small boat and knows his way around much of this end of the marsh.

6.63 OBSTACLES

There are two elements set against the characters: time and terrain. The six smugglers have split into four groups. As time goes on, each smuggler (or pair) has an increasing chance of achieving his objective (see section on "Routes"). In total, the characters have about eight days to round up the outlaws and claim their bounty.

The terrain is a different problem. In the upper end of the delta the marshes are not so bad as in the Slough, but the thickest parts of the Midden are quite enough to contend with. The easiest terrain is the Vale to the south of the delta.

NOTE: *Count the latter as "Open" terrain. The breckland of Tol Britha is fairly flat, i.e., "Open/uninhabited" terrain, but there is a danger of encountering patches of quicksand. Also, this is uninhabited land. Within the Midden (Medinnen) the terrain is "Rough", in parts (especially between the Nog Mennin and the Onodló) so overgrown that it should be treated as "Rough & Wooded". However, the restrictions to movement for these terrain types only apply to overland travel. Of course the best way to get around will be in boats, assuming the PCs know how to use them.*

Naturally, adventuring in the marsh brings its own dangers. There are plenty of nasty animals, snakes, and even birds to beware of, and bigger, nastier things lurk in the depths of the channels and pools, eagerly waiting for the characters to come along. The terrain will make it difficult in places to track the escapees. When they are found, they will probably put up a good fight to avoid being captured and taken away.

The weather could be a further obstacle to both travel and tracking. It is suggested that suitable weather would be some fine, clear days and moonlit nights, with the occasional light shower or morning drift of fog.

6.64 REWARDS

The major reward for this adventure is the bounty offered by Amtaur. Note that this bounty is supposedly only available to the characters met by Amtaur at the camp by the Onodló. A total of 700gp is offered: 100gp for each smuggler and 200gp for Ringór. There is also the value of any beasts killed during the adventure (e.g., a mink pelt or snake skin). Finally, Amtaur and Thalion overlooked some goods hidden in the hideout.

7.0 ADVENTURE 2: MICANDOR'S TOWER

7.1 THE TALE

Some hundreds of years ago there was a Governor of Anórien named Micandor; he was a good friend of King Atanatar II, Alcarin, also called "the Glorious." Atanatar gave Micandor a handsome grant of land and a good deal of gold, and with the gold, the noble lord had a tower built in the heart of the Ethir Onodló. The tower was strong and tall, constructed by master masons with stone quarried in the White Mountains. Looking out across the marshes, it was a place of refuge for all travelling through the delta. In those days there was rather more traffic between the northern provinces and Gondor's heartland, and the river folk eagerly relied on the tower's facilities.

In this day and age, the Onodló is less busy and the tower less frequented by traders and travellers. The hold's exterior has been weathered by years of damp ice and biting winds and all its lower half is covered with moss and lichen. Creeping plants threaten to engulf the entire corner tower.

The tower has been put in the hands of Hieryan, a Keeper under the command of Amtaur, Customs Master for the delta. The Keeper has a dual responsibility towards travellers in the region. He supplies pilots for a small fee (pilots also being quartered at Fen's Edge and Twyferry); and also maintains a small garrison for local patrols. Up to six pilots and twelve guardsmen are billeted in the tower; however anyone is welcome, should they stop and wish to pass the night in safety, even here in the heart of the uninhabited delta.

7.11 THE PLOT

Day 1. Uner Edolin, a "general trader," arrives, coming upstream from the Anduin. His pilot is ill and he needs to take on another riverman. There are none at the tower, so he waits.

Day 2. No boats arrive through the morning and afternoon. Uner is irritable and passes time gambling with guardsmen. His crew and Ladro, his apprentice, wait on their boat. (Actually, Ladro appears to be having some sort of extended manic fit — the result of a bad poitín — and is confined to his cabin.) In the evening a grain barge arrives from Twyferry with three pilots aboard; they have been held up waiting to see their new Captain. It is too late for Uner to leave.

Night 2. Ladro runs amok and kills a crewman from the grain barge named Hathon. The murder occurs in the tower's courtyard and Hathon's screams rouse the household. The gates are open and the villain flees.

Day 3. Ladro's disappearance is noted and a search party is organized to track him down. He is found in the afternoon and captured or killed, but is of unsound mind. By the time Hieryan has finished his inquest, it is too late for Uner's boat to leave.

Day 4. Before the trader and barge leave, Hieryan invites the characters on a "proper" hunt, at dawn. While the PCs and Hieryan are absent, the crewmen and guards have a quick drink to see them off. The poitín they drink, however, is poisoned and also sends them mad. Numerous armed men gather and rush about, killing everything that moves, and even striking one another. The PCs come back from their hunt...

7.12 THE CRITICAL EVENTS

Many of the events of this adventure may be the result of the characters' own actions, and these cover a range of possibilities too wide to detail here. The major events are suggested below, but you should be prepared to let the characters follow their own threads if they so desire. Don't force them to conform to a narrow plotline. Remember that all the same, constantly changing events are happening around them.

MURDER OF HATHON

Ladro murders Hathon in a messy and violent action. Cooped up all day and crazed by the ithilwen in his blood, Ladro uses his strength to break open the cabin door on the ship. He ignores the crewmen sleeping on the deck, although they wake up and shrink back into the shadows anyway. He heads for the tower and encounters Hathon, who has been sleepless and thought he might sleep better on the boat.

Using his hands, Ladro kills Hathon in a cold, beserk fury, and there is much screaming until the crewman ends up in a silent, crumpled, bloody heap. The screams will inevitably raise the whole tower, but by the time anyone gets outside Ladro has vanished into the inky night. His blood-stained trail is not difficult to follow, since it leads down to the shore and is marked by wet footprints. The prints may be picked up again on the other side of the river, where they head down the levee. Hieryan will organize the men into search parties under Nísi and Teiglor. If they desire, the characters can form a third party.

Ladro may be tracked through the marsh and when found, depending on the time elapsed, may or may not still be crazed. If so, he will attack. If the guards find him, they will kill him, regardless of his condition. If his manic fit has disappeared, he will be mindless and lethargic. Hieryan will quickly judge and execute him.

THE HUNT

Hieryan will insist the characters go hunting with him, especially if they were helpful bringing Ladro to justice. The Castle Warden can be very persuasive, with fascinating tales of hunts past and creatures he has stalked in the marshes. He offers them a number of alternatives: riding with the marsh mastiffs he breeds to hunt boar or deer; a hunt afoot with bows to shoot game birds; or a duck shoot in the marshes in punts. In all cases it is very important that the characters leave at or before dawn. The hunting will be good, and the party may be accompanied by Angrid and Nísi — depending on how strong or weak the party is, and how well you judge they will be able to handle the poitín-crazed lunatics menacing the tower on their return.

RETURN TO THE TOWER

When the party returns with their bag, they see that the palisade's gates stand ajar and neither the trader's boat nor the grain barge has left. As they approach, a guard named Mathed will spring out and attack them. After they have dealt with him, they will hear calls and screams from the Tower — from Ulrod on the roof, and perhaps from Yoruvé if they can see the windows of the herbarium. If Nísi is not with them, he will swim back from the sanctuary of the mudbank he sought earlier, and assist if he can.



There are a seven more *poitín*-crazed people at the Tower, as well as three who have fled into the marshes and might return to surprise the characters later. There are already several casualties. (The location and status of each NPC at the Tower is given, so see codes in 'The NPCs' section.)

NOTE: *All those affected by the poitín will try to avoid capture, using stealth and skills to assassinate the characters and, unless stunned, always fighting to the death. After the ithilhwen wears off, there is a 50% chance of recovery after one to ten days.*

7.2 THE NPCs

The following non-player characters are present at Micandor's tower at some point during the four days covered by the plot. Those described as being killed may, at the GM's discretion, survive, or their personalities etc. may play some other part in the drama.

NOTE: *Where a character's name is marked with a *, this means that they are afflicted with poitín-madness; the number/letter indicates where, in or around the tower, they will be lurking. A character's name marked with a † or ‡ indicates they have been killed or trapped (respectively) by crazed characters, the number/letter locating them.*

HIERYAN THE KEEPER

Hieryan is a personable, middle-aged Dúnadan from southern Gondor whose accent is noticeably different from the local variety. Although he obeys and efficiently executes the law with apparent indifference to pity, he is sensible, generous, and kind-hearted and enjoys a few simple pleasures. He regards this posting to be quite suitable and he has little ambition to go much further up the military ladder. Here in the Ethir Onodló, Hieryan can perform a useful service for his King while indulging his hobbies of hunting and training dogs. Lately, he has grown especially fond of the Marsh Mastiffs and breeds them himself. Hieryan has been Keeper for eight winters, and has been married to Yoruvě for nineteen years. She is very supportive and he has enormous affection for her.

Notable Skills: Dog-handling 57, Ride 51, Administration 45, Rowing 45, Stalk/Hide 35, Track 31, Fishing 30, Swim 26. **Languages:** Westron 5, Adûnaic 5, Sindarin 5, Orkish 3, Quenya 2. **Notable Items:** Anket (longsword) +20 and Detect Evil (50'R) 1x/day; +10 mail; Jade Pendant with Hues 4x/day.

YORUVĖ (‡17)

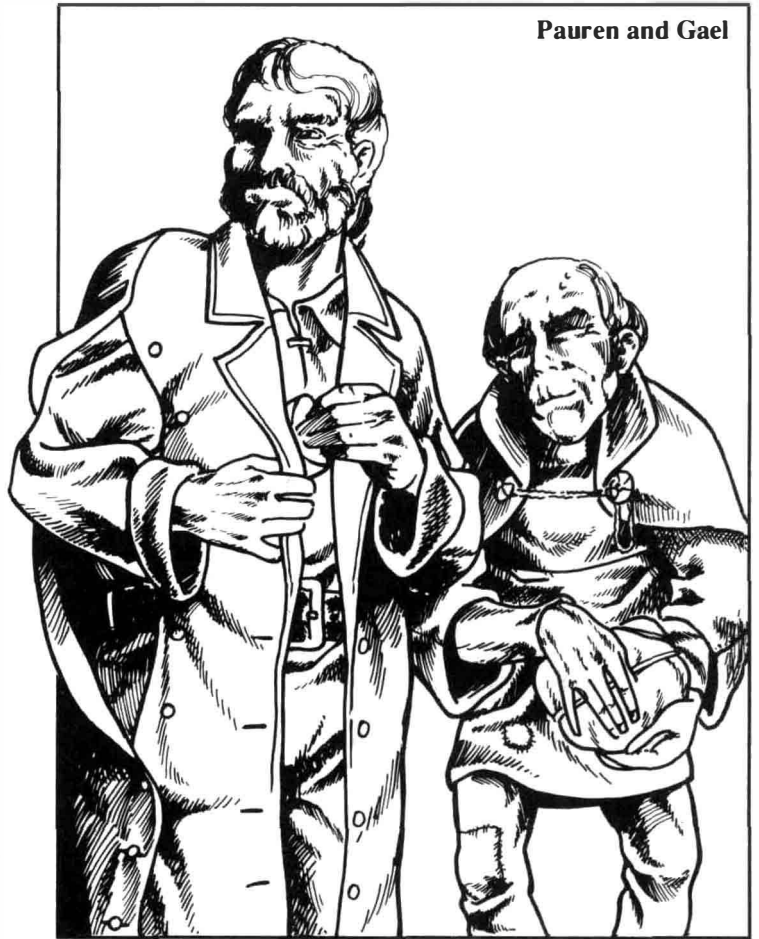
Yoruvě is an herbalist, the wife of the Keeper. She is devoted to the well being of people in the tower and the people of Ethir Onodló in general and uses her talents to produce reliable remedies for the usual diseases and afflictions that are part and parcel of life here. She has always been devoted to the notion of the Valar and has particular reverence for Varda and Estë. Yoruvě has long, fine, dark brown hair with reddish highlights and widely-spaced eyes of a rich brown color. She usually dresses simply: in red, russet, or dark green, occasionally with gold jewelry. She has a large collection of books on herbalism and an excellently equipped laboratory; these give her +25 to Herb Lore and Use Herbs respectively, if she has free access to them. She also has large stores of a variety of plants and herbs.

Notable Skills: Forage 55, Herb Lore 52(+25), Ride 49, Use Items 49, Use Herbs 45(+25), Perception 44, Swim 29, Stalk/Hide 25, Read Runes 19, Directed Spells 13, Base Spells 8. **Languages:** Adûnaic 5, Westron 5, Sindarin 5, Quenya 5. **Spell Lists:** Surface Ways, Plant Mastery, Purifications, Bone/Muscle Ways. **Notable Items:** +5 dagger; Eight Tiles of Varda — if sleep/meditate within them when set out correctly, acts as x2 PP multiplier.

ROGNIR (†6), IOANNA (†15), GAEI (*8)

Rognir, Ioanna, and Gael are three members of the tower's serving staff. Rognir, the groom, has a withered leg, the legacy of an encounter with a particularly aggressive stallion. Although crippled, he loves looking after the horses and dogs and often sleeps in the stables for warmth and company. The guards often refer to him as Froggy or other derogatory nicknames. Ioanna is a maid; she sees to the laundry and keeps the Keeper's rooms clean and tidy. She is young, rather plain but not stupid. Yoruvě looks after her well and occasionally gets her to help in the

Pauren and Gael



herbarium, hoping to stimulate an interest and pass on some knowledge of the healing arts. (Neither Rognir nor Ioanna have any notable skills.)

Gael is the tower's cook, usually assisted in his duty by a guard assigned to him on a rota basis. A rather dour and spotty fellow with an ungainly body, he usually dresses in patched and lumpy clothes. However, he is not as stupid as he looks and he maintains a couple of secrets which he hopes will one day allow him to leave service and acquire more pleasant surroundings. Gael deals in small illegal goods, such as stolen gems, banned drugs, and herbs. He also thieves for himself from anyone likely passing through the tower.

Notable Skills: Trickery (pickpocket) 40, Evaluate Goods 40, Stalk/Hide 36. **Languages:** Westron 4, Sindarin 2, Adûnaic 2. **Notable Items:** 50% chance for 2-20 gems each worth 1-10gp on black market; 50% chance for 1-10 doses of drugs e.g., Merrig, Tartella, Gort, Feduilas, and Phalacus.

BRETRRING (*g), PAUREN (*FLEES)

These two are pilots who return to the tower on the evening of Day 2. Brettring is a young man from the Talath Harroch, the son of a Gondorian-Eothraim couple. He is a very serious and quiet lad, putting his job as a navigator and pilot before everything else. He wears severely cut, plain clothes and keeps his hair cropped very short.

Pauren is an older man who enjoys working as a pilot for the company. Guiding boats up and down the delta, he meets all sorts of people and knows many of the regular travellers. Originally from southern Anórien, he grew up beside the Anduin, so he has always had a love of water and boats. Pauren likes being with Angrid and has become attached to her since first showing her the ropes. He has a failing, however: he drinks, often a lot, and also regularly imbibes stimulating drugs. Currently he gets a supply of Feduilas from Gael the cook.

Notable Skills (both): Swim 55, Navigation 50 (includes Star-gazing), Rivercraft 50.

ANGRID

Angrid is a rural woman, brought up at Tir Limlight. Her mother died young, so her hunter father had to look after her. She was brought up to an outdoor life roaming around on the river and across the grasslands of the Emnets with a sling in her hand. The lack of a mother or siblings, and her long absences from others' company, have made her a little shy, which she covers by being brash, overly enthusiastic, and often grating, even when she means well. She has also developed a fear of the dark.

NOTE: *If she has to go out at night, she must roll on the Hard column of table MT-1 to determine how well she can operate — apply a penalty of 100-result. Add +30 to roll if she has a torch/lantern, or other adjustments, e.g., for moonlight, total darkness etc., as appropriate.*

Angrid usually wears very practical clothes — for instance, trousers, cape, long boots.

Notable Skills: Perception 65, Swim 65, Climb 65, Ride 60, Navigation 55, Track 50, Rowing 45, Stalk/Hide 35, Ambush <5 ranks>, Base Spells 0. **Languages:** Westron 4, Sindarin 4. **Spell Lists:** Path Mastery, Sound/Light Ways. **Notable Items:** 2 flasks of Melendar brew (each holds pint = 20 doses), plus another flask with 8 doses left; +10 staff sling.

DIREVEL (†a)

Direvel is a senior guard who rotates daily command of the other guardsmen with Teiglor. Direvel is a veteran of Dor Rhúnen and a competent warrior, but he lacks the necessary spark to be made an officer. He is quiet and reliable, but dull and lacking in the presence to grasp the moment or inspire his men. He has recurrent pain from an old wound in his thigh, but won't admit it to anyone. Direvel will steer clear of the characters and keep to the room he shares on the middle floor. He has lank blond hair and a moustache, and dresses in a relatively neat uniform.

TEIGLOR (*b)

Teiglor entered the Army relatively late in life, after his merchant business collapsed. He inherited the unwanted trade from his father and persevered for some years, but he eventually gave up. He is a military careerist and is vying for promotion, to catch up with other, younger men, before he gets too old to be considered. He does not have the complete respect of the guards, but has the energy to personally oversee everything they do and make sure they do it sufficiently well to reflect his own competence. Teiglor has short black hair, wears his uniform proudly, and spends much time cleaning its clasps, buckles, and weapons and keeping everything spick and span.

Notable Skills: Trading 35, Evaluate Goods 30, Ride 28, Swim 28, Pick Locks 20, Perception 20. **Languages:** Westron 4, Sindarin 3, Adûnaic 2. **Notable Items:** +10 crossbow.

NISI (ON HUNT OR ‡i)

Nisi is the hero of many young men in the garrison both here and in Mering Steps — and the object of desire of many women. Of lesser Dúnadan descent, he hails from South Ithilien. He has golden, curly hair, a handsome face, and a superb physique. Were it not for the fact that he adores himself far more than any woman could ever love him in return, he would be in and out of more beds than the Entwash has channels. He has a tanned skin and likes showing as much of it as possible; when on patrol he dons the standard Gondorian army gear of mail and surcoat. Off duty or in training, he much prefers slipping on just a loose kirtle and his shiny breastplate, both of which are reputedly made from a mithril alloy, perhaps of Númenórean make. He will typically use only a two-handed sword, and also a huge composite bow of laminated steel which no-one else at the tower can even begin to draw. His special skill of deportment is applied to any chance to show himself off.

Notable Skills: Deportment 55 (70 on looks alone), Swim 54, Climb 39, Perception 25, Stalk/Hide 20, Ride 19. **Languages:** Westron 5, Sindarin 4, Adûnaic 3, Haradaic 3, Offak-Dunael 2. **Notable Items:** Breastplate—treat as wearing No Armor with +25 DB and -10 MM, also negates 90% of criticals specifying shield, neck, shoulder, chest or body; Heavy Composite Bow +15 OB (non-magical)—requires 100+ ST to pull with base range = 75 + ST bonus.

GUARDS

There are three typical foot soldiers in the garrison at the moment, regular army men with a bit of experience, from the heartlands of Gondor:

<i>Henderch</i>	* 8
<i>Gathir</i>	flees but not mad
<i>Fumall</i>	* 16

There are three others from the regular Army, but they are very inexperienced. This posting to the delta is their first. Again, all these young lads are from the heartlands of Gondor, and know very little about the area:

<i>Ulrod</i>	‡ 18 (on roof)
<i>Surion</i>	a
<i>Phreir</i>	a

The final three guards are all locals doing their required service each year as part of the levy supplied by farms, villages and towns:

<i>Mathed</i>	* e
<i>Sisimmon</i>	* 14
<i>Larn</i>	* flees

None of these men will interact much with the party unless necessary, and none have any special background, skills or items.

TRADER'S CREW

The crew of Uner Edolin's trader consists of two middle-aged boatmen, Barach (h) and Orian (* flees). They are typical of the river-borne subcultures within the societies of Middle-earth. Taciturn and untalkative, they have few scruples and embrace plenty of superstitions regarding the rivers that form the highways of their lives. Neither is particularly attractive. They sport beards and wear rough clothes with dyed caps; each has a short sword.

Uner also has an apprentice, Ladro, but he only appears as a poitincrazed madman and killer (see combat capabilities chart).

UNER EDOLIN (FLEES)

A trader and smuggler, Uner has few friends but many sinister acquaintances. He seems pleasant enough, but his easy-going appearance conceals a greedy, grasping nature. He occasionally supplies Gael and may also offer a player character some "restricted availability" goods, ridiculously overcharging them at first and thereafter ripping them off for as much as he can get. He will do anything to protect his own fragile reputation. Uner will detect as evil if anyone tries.

Notable Skills: Stalk/Hide 74, Climb 62, Perception 61, Trickery 60, Pick Locks 54, Swim 52, Sailing 50, Rope-mastery 45, Rowing 35, Ride 27, Disarm Traps 19. **Languages:** Westron 5, Dunael 5, Sindarin 2. **Notable Items:** Eyeglass of Trap Detection 3x/day at 10th level; Pigskin Boots +10 to Stalk MM; Dagger of Recall — returns to thrower's hand on word of command, moving 30' round.

GRAIN BOAT CREW

The grain boat has a crew of four who are also joint owners of the boat and its cargo. They are all rural men of Calenardhon and have broad country accents, their Westron being mixed with a few words of Dunael. After Hathon's death, the other crewmen stay aboard their boat — until they too have a fateful farewell drink at the tower.

<i>Hathon</i>	slain by Ladro
<i>Núil</i>	* f (grain boat)
<i>Echad</i>	* f (trader)
<i>Drengist</i>	† 4

LISSUIN (‡f — GRAIN BOAT)

Lissuin is a passenger on the grain boat with no connection with any of the crewmen. Indeed, they know little about her, only that she turned up on the quay at Onodrih and paid the agreed fare to Osgiliath. Lissuin has travelled from Tharbad where she is the lover of Imlach, Gondor's Canotar or governor. At present, she carries a special message from him, a plea for funds addressed to Vinyaran, the King's Commander, head of the King's Army. The message is hidden in a watertight scroll tube in a secret compartment of her leather baggage-chest.

Lissuin was brought up in Tharbad and had a little training as a thief and spy. Now she "breaks" the law, not for her own sake, but only to work for Imlach, whose service to the King's Commander imbues her act with

legitimacy. She is travelling disguised as a "distressed gentlewoman," i.e., one with little money and limited circumstances, which she hopes to improve when she reaches Gondor's great capital. Lissuin wears demure, understated clothing of reasonable quality with a lovely comb in her hair.

Notable Skills: *Disguise 45, Sing 35, Play Harp 30, Read Runes 27, Swim 22, Track 22, Stalk/Hide 22, Pick Locks 22, Directed Spells 12, Base Spells 2. Langauges:* *Westron 5, Dunael 4, Sindarin 3, Adûnaic 2, Kuduk 2. Spell List:* *Unbarring Ways. Notable Items:* *a few simple disguises; harp; 2 balanced throwing daggers; Coral Comb — held in hand can fire Shock Bolt (100') 1x/day.*

7.3 MICANDOR'S TOWER AREA

7.31 LAYOUT OF MICANDOR'S TOWER

As mentioned in the Tale, Micandor's Tower was built from good solid stone around T.A. 1180. It is built on a square plan with an integral corner tower, a common feature in mid-Third Age architecture (e.g., Barad Baran in Dor-en-Emil and Alcaros south of Pelargir). The tower is raised above the level of the annual floods by a purpose-built motte, an artificial mound 30' high. The top of the motte is enclosed by a wooden palisade, within which is a wooden stable and kennel.

SITE

a. Wooden Gate. Made from solid baulks of timber 12" square fixed to 6" thick battens on the inside, the gates are 9' high and are adorned with iron spikes that project from the upper edge. At night the gates are closed and barred with a wooden bar banded with steel. Outside the gate a bell is hung. It has no clapper, since it swings too freely in the wind, but the bell makes a good sound if struck with any metal object.

b. Stable (and Kennel). This building is a moderately sturdy, clinker-built structure fashioned from wooden laths. There are entrances at each

end, one side having five stalls for horses. The other side accommodates six much smaller dog kennels. In addition to the two or three horses that reside here (plus any the characters might bring), the place is home to six Marsh Mastiffs. Each has his own kennel, and four adults and two half-trained yearlings live in the building. Windowless, the stable has a thatched roof and doors bolt on the outside. Beside the stable is a pump for water and a trough.

c. Tower. See Plan in detail in Section 7.32.

d. Palisade. A 12' high fence of upright logs set into the motte and supported by battens and buttresses. The gate and Tower are the only interruptions.

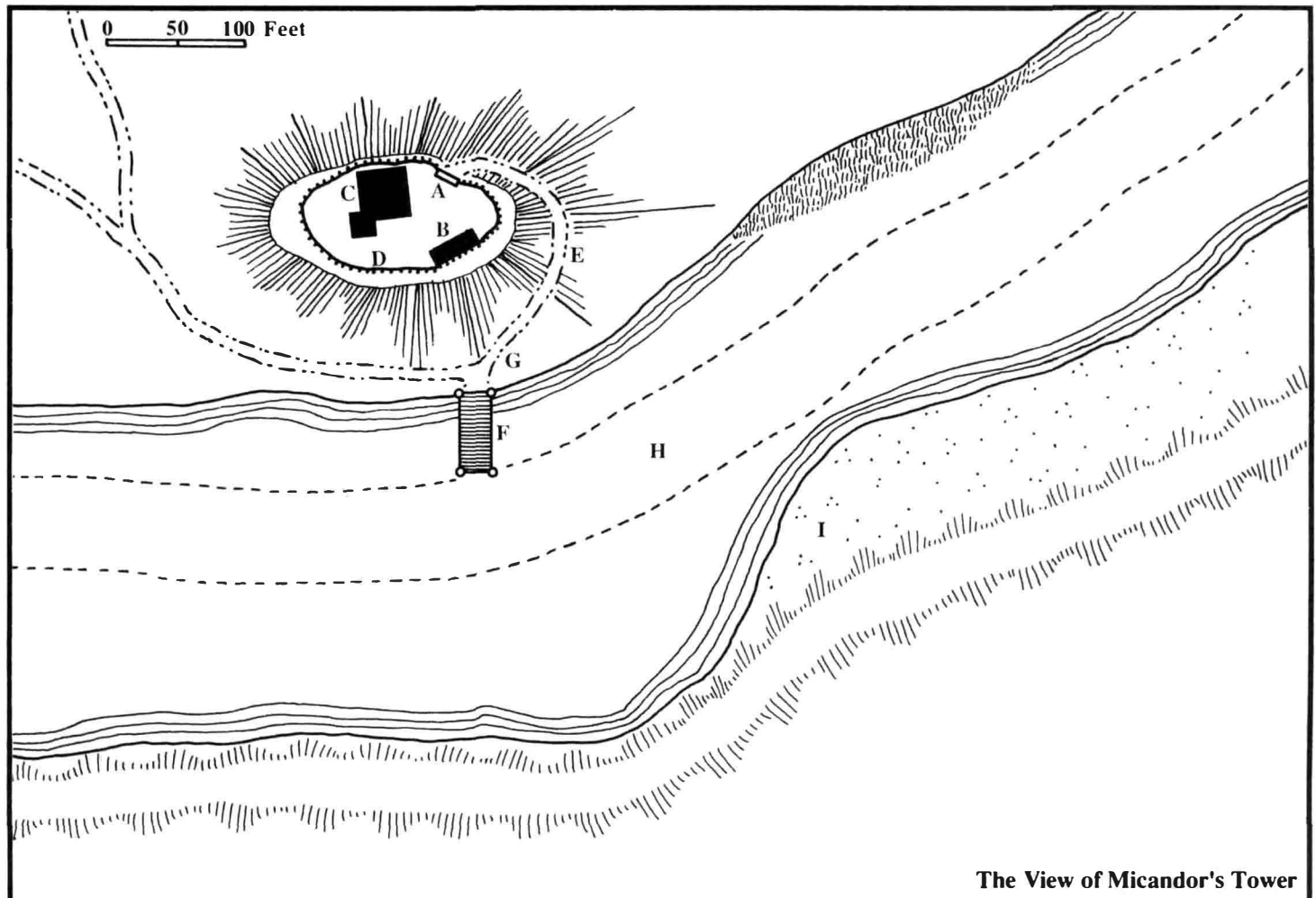
e. Track. A track of packed dirt and gravel winds its way around the motte to a faint path leading away from the river and down to the jetty (f). In the tower's courtyard there are a couple of handcarts for bringing supplies up to the cellars or stables.

f. Pontoon Jetty. The jetty is a raft of logs floating on the water of the Nog Mennin. The logs are cleverly bound together and at each corner is a broad ring of non-rusting steel. The rings are set over great piles driven deep into the riverbed and bank. The piles are immovable but the pontoon of logs floats loosely and can ride up and down with fluctuating water levels. On the bank another, smaller strip of bound logs has one end firmly attached to the ground and the other flexibly linked to the near edge of the jetty. In this way heavy goods and animals can always be disembarked.

g. Slips. There are a number of upturned boats on the slips here, including a coracle, four punts and two skiffs. Oars and poles are either stored inside the boat, or may be found at the tower.

h. Dredged Channel. The deepest section of the river, the channel is kept clear of surface and underwater debris, silt, and vegetation. All boats can navigate it.

i. Mudbank. This muddy beach is exposed for most of the year. Little grows here. This bank is where Ladro's marks may be found.



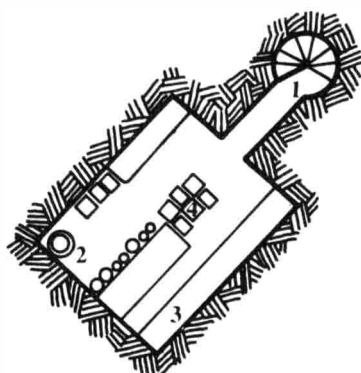
The View of Micandor's Tower

7.32 THE PLAN OF THE TOWER

THE CELLAR

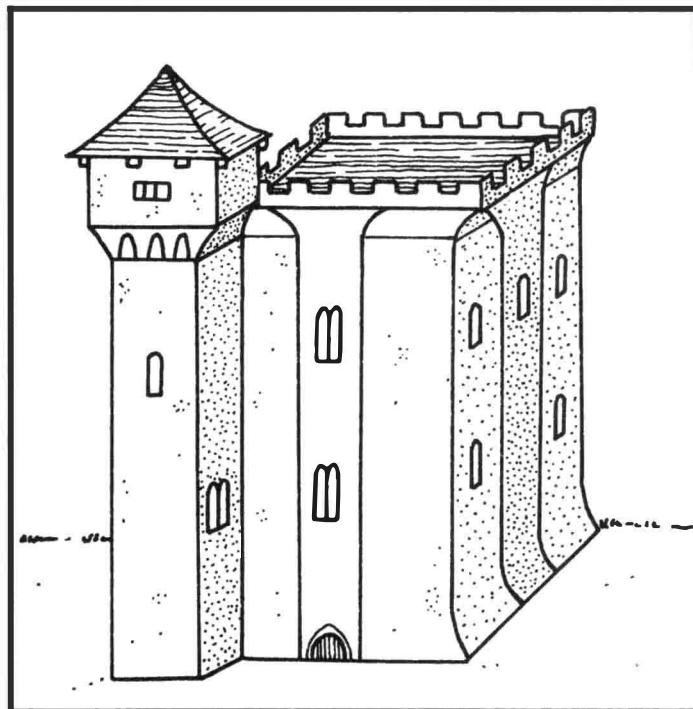
1. **Spiral Staircase.** This stair leads from the cellars (15' below ground) to the upper floor of the main tower (55' above ground).
2. **Well.** A stone-lined hole 2' in diameter and 25' deep; water is between 15' and 20' below the floor of the cellar, depending on the season. Occasionally it will come within 5' of the flagstones when spring floods are very severe.
3. **Shelves.** The Tower's stores are kept here: dried meat and salted fish, pickled vegetables, butter, root vegetables, flour, tubs of lard and dripping, oil for lamps and boxes of wax candles, honey and preserves, ale and wine (nothing stronger), cloth and wool and thread, strips and pieces of leather, some tools and other equipment and so on. Larger items (such as sacks and barrels) are stacked on the floor (4).

The Cellar



GROUND FLOOR

5. **Entrance.** The tower's only entrance by way of a short, sloped ramp. Two doors of iron-reinforced, oak defend the tower. They are kept shut and locked, protected by a heavy iron bar that pivots up or down into a clasp. Beyond these doors are a few steps, leading up to the inner door, a less robust affair of attractively carved mahogany. It is a single door with two locks, each of which is Hard (-10) to pick. Hieryan has a set of both keys, while the three senior guards hold one key each (assume any two senior guards can open the door between them).
6. **Corridor.** A wooden screen wall some 10' high divides this passage from the Common Room. It provides quick access to the cellars via the stair (1).
7. **Privy.** The sanitary arrangements are not wonderful, but function. Two alcoves are furnished with wooden seats over holes which open through the stone of the walls, sending waste out onto the motte, to be washed away in the next rain.
8. **Common Room.** This large room has a 20' tall ceiling and three small, high-set windows facing west. It is furnished simply, with numerous tables, benches and chairs, plus piles of rugs and blankets, and a few furs. It is used as a Common Room during the day, and any travellers are welcome to sleep here near the hearth at night. The room is heated by two peat-burning fireplaces (9) which also serve as Gael's kitchen. The peat is stacked outside by the stable, and in two large boxes built into alcoves in the room. Unfortunately, the room is so large that the far end seldom receives any warmth.
10. **Keeper's Office.** Hieryan keeps a tidy office; he makes sure that all paperwork or official business is finished promptly and neatly filed away. A long table made from a single piece of elm wood stands alone in the center of the room with a simple, comfortable chair behind it. An alcove screened off by crimson velvet drapes conceals two bookcases that face one another in the corner of the room. These contain records of the Tower, recent scrolls of communications from the Customs Master and Governor, bookkeeping ledgers, informative and reference works in numerous

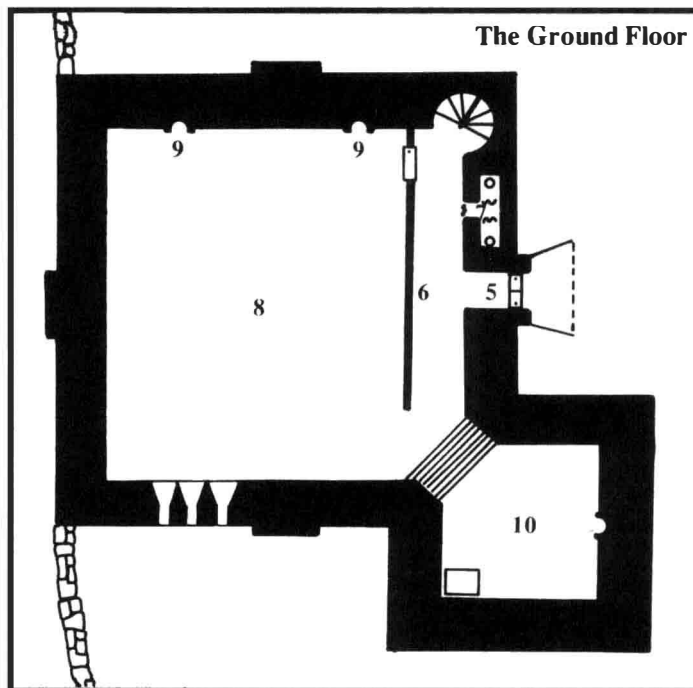


volumes (dictionaries, census and landholding figures, official circulars on enemies of the Kingdom, guides to government offices, military handbooks, etc.) and also some private books of the Keeper. Hieryan has no scribe, but likes to keep the senior guards interested in promotion ever-vigilant by requiring their assistance from time to time. Other chests are placed discreetly around the room, holding stationery, seals of office, and so on. A particularly strong and secure, unmarked iron chest holds the tower treasury. Locked and Extremely Hard (-30) to open, the chest is guarded by a needle trap.

TRAP: The spring-powered needle is Very Hard (-20) to detect or disarm and, if triggered, is Extremely Hard (-30) to avoid. Victims receive 1-2 doses of a Marsh Adder venom. (See Section 4.0.)

The chamber also contains some padded stools and two other chairs. It is lit by five ornate oil-burning lanterns.

The Ground Floor



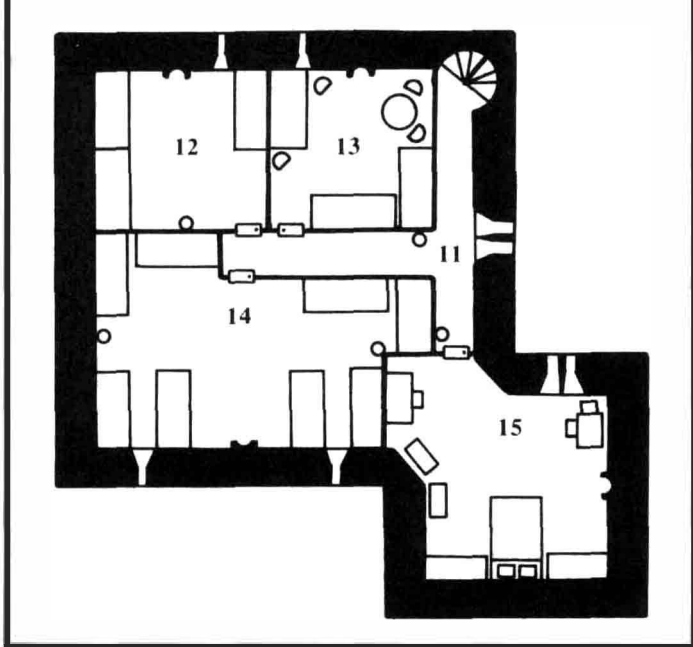
MIDDLE FLOOR

11. Corridor. Like all rooms here, this hall has a solid wooden floor which is supported on massive joists. The ceiling is around 15' high and the passage is lit with oil lamps set about 7' off the floor. The windows are glazed.

12. Pilots' Room. This smallish room has three bunk beds and can sleep up to 6 pilots. However the rivermen are rarely all here at once, since they ply between Twyferry and Fen's Edge or even down to the Anduin. Beneath the beds are storage lockers containing clothes and other personal articles but nothing of value. A fireplace heats the room and there are a couple of rugs on the floor. Another locker has spare linen and a few oddments such as lamp oil, drinking horns and dice.

13. Senior Guards' Room. The three senior guards, Direvel, Teiglor and Nisi (see NPCs), count this separate dormitory among their privileges. Each has a comfortable bed, some compensation for the month that they have to spend here away from the attractions of town. There are a few chairs and a round table in the corner, and a fireplace to heat the room. Beneath the table is a large box with a few flagons, some food (nuts, cheese, smoked meat, fruit, biscuits) and other shared belongings. Each man also has a locked chest beneath his bed with appropriate personal items (see individual descriptions for an idea).

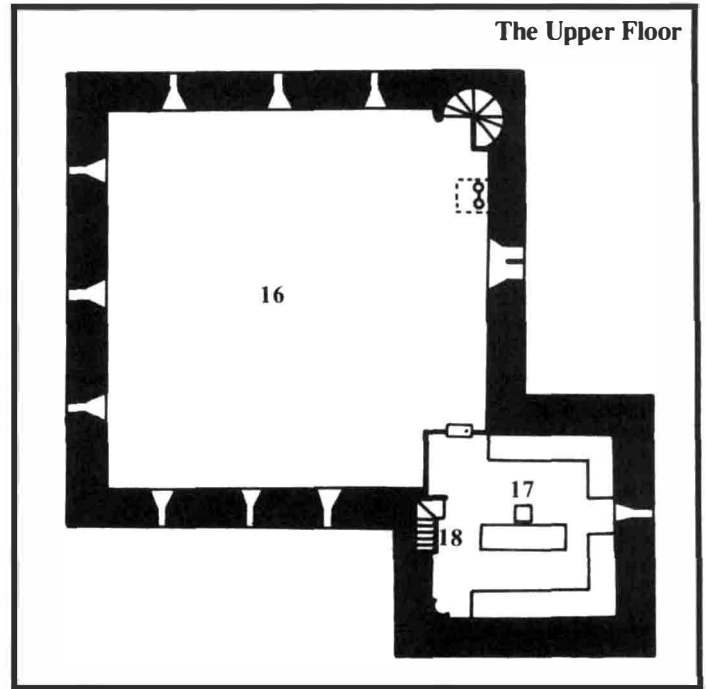
The Middle Floor



14. Dormitory. This room is shared by the other nine guards, although only eight sleep here at a time as one will always be on watch in the Common Room downstairs. The room is not elaborately furnished, but the guards have little to complain about. The linen and mattresses are clean and fresh, there are rugs on the floor, and there is a warm fireplace to gather about. It can get a little cramped at times, but that's army life.

15. Keeper's Chamber. Hieryan and Yoruvë share this rather sumptuous chamber dominated by a four-poster bed with scarlet drapery. The bed is his own, brought here at considerable expense, but then Hieryan has his priorities and a comfortable life is high among them. Either side of the dark wooden bed are matching wardrobes, one for each of them. Hieryan has several uniforms, rough clothing for trekking about the marshes, smart riding outfits and formal wear when important guests are passing through. Also in the room are a dressing table, a fireside table and easy chairs, a private desk they share and some other chests of linen, sundry supplies, toiletries, etc. In one of the wardrobes is an elegant bathtub (the guards have their own in the courtyard or Common Room, if the senior guard in charge that day is feeling exceptionally generous). Both Hieryan and Yoruvë keep scrupulously clean.

The Upper Floor



UPPER FLOOR

16. Open Room. This spacious room was once an additional Common Room, mostly used as sleeping accommodation. However, with the decline in travel and the numbers requiring beds for the night, the fireplaces have been bricked up and the room cleared out. More recently, Yoruvë has taken it over as a place to dry herbs she collects, and these now hang from suspension racks over the greater part of the room. With the windows left unglazed and unshuttered, the plants have an ideal place to dry.

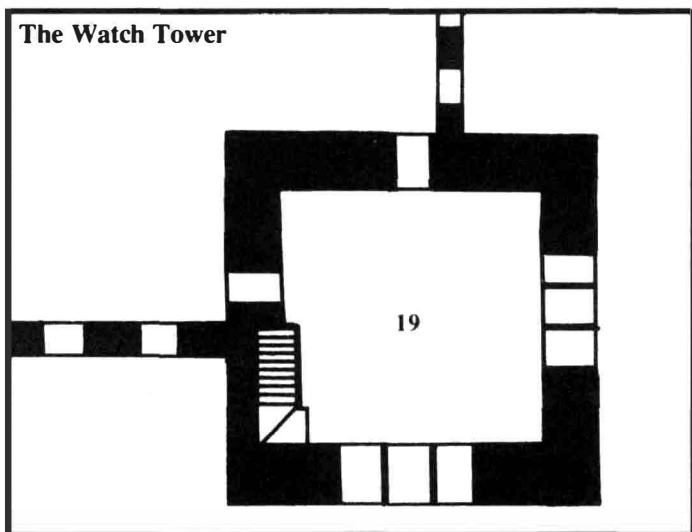
17. Herbarium. A room in the corner tower, the Herbarium is wholly occupied by Yoruvë's herbal laboratory. With the plentiful resources for gathering and preserving herbs afforded by the tower, she has been able to organize her work on a fairly large scale, making batches of salves, restoratives, medicines, and other herbal preparations on a regular basis. She has a good market in Mering Steps and also sees to all the needs of the garrison here. The herbarium is lined with shelves and workbenches. On the shelves are books, jars of preserved herbs, mineral substances (chalk, lime, sand, volcanic powder, ash, charcoal, sulphur, powdered iron ore), animal extracts (such as grease for salves, tallow, ground bone and horn), liquids (pure water, plant extracts, even venoms and poisonous secretions for antidotes) and the like. Numerous basins, stills, retorts, mortars, pestles, whole racks of knives, bottles, and jars of every size, boards, slabs and slates, mills, mincers, cauldrons, and copper pots clutter the workbenches... all in all, an excellently equipped place. In the corner is a fireplace over which a tripod stands. Some stairs go up to the watch tower. The door may be locked (on 01-45) and Hard (-10) to pick. Both Hieryan and Yoruvë have keys. A small pump protrudes from the wall beside the stair. While difficult to operate, it assists in bring water up from cisterns kept by the well in the cellar.

18. Ladder to Battlements. An iron ladder fixed to the wall ascends to a trapdoor normally bolted on the inside. The trapdoor swings down to reveal a final few rungs onto the Tower's flat, paved roof and battlements.

WATCH TOWER

19. Watch Room. This room is only reached by the stair from Yoruvë's herbarium. There is a door at the top which may be locked and Very Hard (-20) to pick. The Keeper and all senior guards have the key. In the room are a few stools and a brazier; the main features are the windows in each wall which allow an excellent view of the countryside hereabouts. The windows are just large enough to squeeze through, but may be shuttered on the inside. The shutters are of a light wood only designed to keep out the worst of the wind and rain.

NOTE: *Much of the Tower, especially on the side facing away from the courtyard, is covered with moss or bogland creepers. They are not strong enough to support the weight of anything more than a small animal (say 10-15 lbs).*



7.33 THE LAND AROUND THE TOWER

There are three distinct areas around Micandor's Tower: the north, the south, and the west (see Color Map on page 37). These areas are delineated by the channels of the Onodló, which divide up this part of its delta. The main channels, including the Nog Mennin by which the tower stands, are mostly free from vegetation and attacks of pondweed. This is due to the frequent traffic and the work of the dredgers, and also to the beds of reeds and rushes which support the banks and stifle other growth.

The northern area is boggy, wet scrubland. The bogs are of two types: the fen-like bogs forming in wide, shallow depressions, and the smaller (typically round) bogs called cauldron bogs. The larger sinks are fed by rivulets, some containing pools. Other brackish ponds can also be found as there is impermeable rock underneath and the water table is very close to the surface. Grass cover is good, interrupted by the lush, darker moss of bogs. There are a few areas of raised land and of scrub (typically together); the scrub is of gorse, furze, bush-heather, bilberry, myrtle and vetch, with patches of ling and heather around and between them. Bracken thrives on the slopes.

The southern area is marshier and bleaker. The more acidic soils stifle many plants, leaving spear-sharp moor rushes and fen grass covering the open ground between dank little bogs. There are some scattered boulders and stretches of sand where nothing grows. A small ridge, topped by some tangled briar and scrub, rises up some way from the tower.

The western area around the tower is located at the eastern end of the Midden, a very wet and marshy fen. The tallest plants here are the stout bell rushes and reeds which occur in very large beds. These are favored breeding places for heron, stork and bittern alike. The mossy, damp land between is colonized by marsh wort, stitchwort, bog pimpernel, bedstra, cottongrass, clubmoss and horsetails of various species. Other weeds and worts thrive in the still waters of the myriad channels and streamlets that interconnect. There are a few places of open mud and even a couple of hillocks rising from the mire.

Along the fringes some of the major channels are intermittent thickets of willow, dwarf sycamore and birches. Edible orange-cap boletus (a sort of fungus) grow beneath the birches and are gathered as a delicacy.

SITES OF NOTE

The following are some particular sites of interest that the characters might come across, especially if they go hunting with Hieryan.

- 1. Jatewoone covert.** This is the only known breeding site of the Jatewoone in the Ethir Onodló. (See ICE's campaign module entitled *Dunland and the Southern Misty Mountains*.) A pair of the giant marsh birds have built a substantial covert, or nest, of mud and woven reeds. They mate every second year, the young leaving after a year near the nest. Currently there are two adult birds and one young Jatewoone. Yoruvë discovered the covert and will take interested parties to view it — but not to hunt the birds, and only if they swear secrecy.
- 2. Stone circle.** A ring of large, irregular boulders some twenty yards across surrounds a miry depression where Splayfoot Goodwort grows. A dose of this plant's seeds, crushed into a drink, instills confidence and singleness of purpose (+25 to activity) for 1-4 hours in those acting for "good" purposes. Strangely, the alignment of the stones in the circle is the work of nature, the deposit of an ancient flood. Whether it is the result of an accident or magic remains a local mystery.
- 3. Wild sheep run.** This track is used by wild sheep: a useful safe route through the boggy land. However, the sheep are sometimes attacked by small packs of Merisc Tykes.
- 4. Stone spire.** A tall stone pillar rises from the ground beside a small pool. The stone was in fact raised in reverence by ancient (First Age) tribesmen, the Mebion Bron, who settled the Entwash Vale before the delta grew so wide. (Nature and the onslaught of later Men have all but eradicated any traces of their presence.) The pool occupies a pit they dug and once used for votive offerings. In the silt under the water are some remarkably attractive stone carvings of birds and beasts.
- 5. Ruined settlement.** Three adjacent loops of tumbled stone and an old furrow show where once a small group lived. There is evidence of three circular huts and a fenced earthen bank, once inhabited by the Mebion Bron who raised the standing stone (4). A track currently used by wild boar leads to (6).
- 6. Mossy stone.** On top of a low, rounded hummock is a moss-covered stone. The moss conceals a wealth of swirling, spiral abstract designs. (With a successful Perception Roll, one will understand that these represent eyes.) The stone radiates an aura of magic quite strongly, but passively.
Anyone touching the stone and closing their eyes must make an RR vs Channeling at 10th level. If they fail, the stone's magic overcomes them; otherwise nothing happens. The magic will deliver to the toucher an image of all the stone has "observed" in the last day. It has been storing up images for the last five thousand or so years and thus puts the toucher into a catatonic/convulsive state for 10 + 5-50 minutes. At the end of this time (during which they may not be removed from contact with the stone), they may make a SM with cumulative IT and PR bonuses to remember anything in particular about their vision. Otherwise they will simply experience a profound sense of awe at the passing ages and later recurrent dreams associated with the stone.
- 7. The Gallows-thorn.** These blackthorn trees are named for the habits of the gruesome squacco (or little) herons which dwell in the undergrowth here, on the edge of the wet marshes. The squaccos (there are a dozen or so pairs) live in hidden nests under the thorns. During the day, the males venture out to catch small mammals, frogs, fish and other marsh creatures. Before eating their prey, the male squaccos impale them on the thorns and leave them to rot, protected by the hen birds. The male squacco is dull colored and silent; the hen bright pink, black and white, and capable of emitting a terrible screech. The hen can use a 1st level *Stun Song* once per day, doing so if they or their prey are threatened.
- 8. Grave.** Here, a head stone bearing three faint runes and the date 1327 marks shallow grave. The runes (make a Perception roll) are A — N — T, standing for Andros Na-Tyliand; this is the grave of an explorer/adventurer lost with a party and succumbed to Marsh Flux before his lost party could find its way again. Little was buried with him, and only 20gp (once concealed in a secret belt compartment) has survived.

9. **Lights.** Marsh undercurrents carry much rotting debris to this pool where the gases of decomposition bubble to the surface, often producing swamp lights like Will-o'-the-Wisps or Swamp Candles.
10. **Rock surface.** The sheared surface of a huge boulder tilts sky-wards and in silhouette resembles a ruined castle or house. The wind always whistles eerily here and sudden damp, clinging mists blow across the unwary wanderer with chilling fingers. No-one seems to know why.

7.4 THE TASK

There are three parts to this adventure. First of all, there the slaying of Hathon and the hunt for the killer. Second comes Hieryan's invitation to a hunt or shoot, away from the tower. Finally, the adventure culminates with the capture of the poitin-crazed men who have wreaked havoc around the tower — which involves bringing Uner, the real culprit, to justice.

7.41 STARTING THE CHARACTERS

The characters should arrive at the tower on or before Day 3, as given in the Plot Outline. They can either be introduced as guests of Hieryan the Keeper or of his wife Yoruvë, or they may be simply passing through. The company might even be using the tower as a temporary base while hunting some nasty creatures in the Midden or while foraging for special herbs they need.

It may well be useful to have the characters frequent this locale so that they have some knowledge of it, and also some idea of how to get about, for example by using coracles, punts, rowboats, and bogshoes.

7.42 AIDS

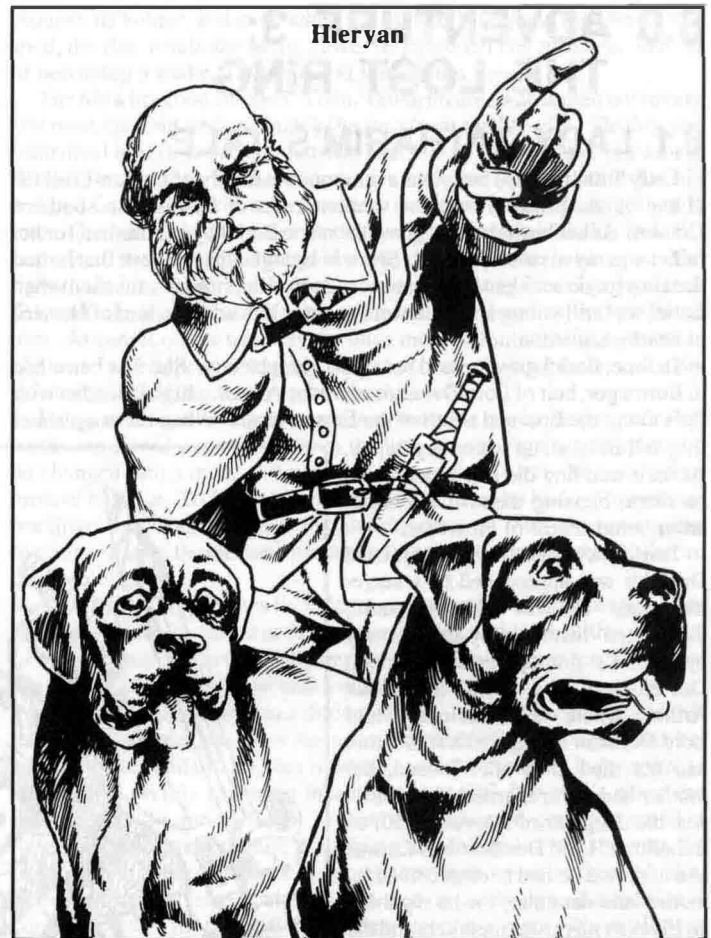
The characters will mostly have to help themselves in this adventure. In the search for Ladro they will be assisted by guardsmen from the tower, so if they suffer any injuries, Hieryan's wife Yoruvë will be able to help heal them. Hieryan is a friendly and generous fellow who will be a useful friend in all sorts of adversity. His one failing is a fear of spiders.

Naturally, the temporary insanity with which the men are afflicted will be a help to the PCs in one sense, since the lunatics will lose all rational thought. They do, however, have increased strength and hostility.

7.43 OBSTACLES

There are few specific obstacles to the players accomplishing their objectives. The primary one is Uner Edolin himself; once the other men start going mad, he will quickly realize who is responsible (he suspected what was the problem with Ladro). He will quickly see to it that he is protected and will take any measure necessary to remove evidence and confound the PCs.

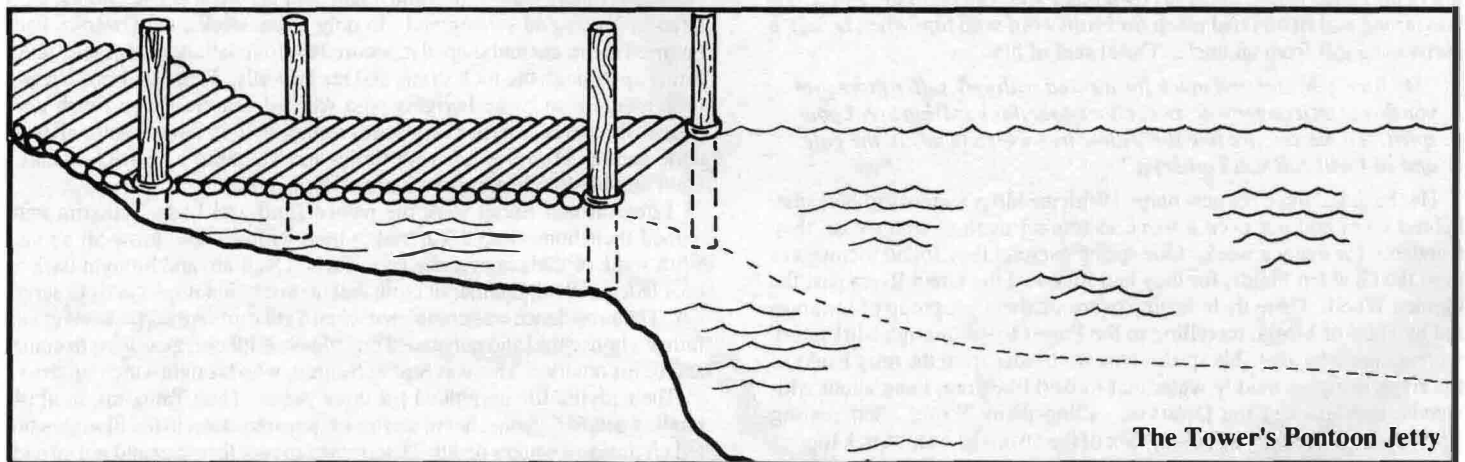
Remember one hidden danger: Uner's supply of poitin (pronounced potcheen), which is concealed amongst the trade goods on his boat. It contains a poison known as ithilhwen, an alkali found in a number of substances, including the potatoes from which poitin is distilled. If any character takes a good drink from any of the flagons (all are tainted) they will have to make an 8th level RR against poison. Should they fail, they will be crazed for 51-100 hours. When in a crazed state, a victim regresses to a more primitive level of consciousness and cannot utilize anything



more complicated than a simple bow or lever (no keys, crossbows, etc.). They also become paranoid and psychotic, and desirous of killing anyone remotely threatening. Finally, the poison lends them a manic strength, increasing their ST bonus by 10. However, every time they employ their newfound strength (e.g., each blow struck or object lifted) they take 1-4 concussion hits as a result of increased exhaustion.

7.44 REWARDS

There is no promised reward for this adventure. Of course, characters can certainly keep whatever they catch during the Hunt (part 2). It is also likely that Hieryan will reward them for any help they can give rescuing the individuals threatened by the crazed men. This might be up to 250gp and a promise of hospitality whenever they are passing by the tower. If Yoruvë is rescued by characters she will offer them a regular supply of useful herbs and herbal remedies.



The Tower's Pontoon Jetty

8.0 ADVENTURE 3: THE LOST RING

8.1 LADY TATHARIM'S TALE

Lady Tatharim was born into a minor noble family of Dor-en-Emil (S. "Land of the Prince") near the western coast of Belfalas, in southern Gondor. At her birth she was given the name Eariel by her mother, for her father was mysteriously absent. She was brought up to believe that he had died in a tragic accident before she was born. Her mother remarried when Eariel was still young and both went north to live with the lord of Harciril in nearby Lamedon.

In time, Eariel grew up and became a great beauty. She was betrothed to Bormegor, heir of Lord Denathir of Minas Arthor, a high Dúnadan with fiefs along the Erui and south of the Emyn Arnen. When the couple met they fell in love and were very happy. At their wedding the sun shone down on them, blessing them in the bridal arbor, amid scores of blossoms.

Just weeks after the wedding, Lord Denathir was approached by a secretive man. He was a former guard, discharged dishonorably for thievery by Eariel's grandparents. Leaving Dor-en-Emil, he went to Minas Arthor, where he maliciously told Lord Denathir that Eariel's true father had not died after all. Indeed, her mother had never married him; Eariel was the daughter of a lover, an Elf of Edhellond. Lord Denathir was furious and assumed he had been deceived by mother and daughter, for he regarded all Elves as sorcerous meddlers and the real betrayers of Man in Middle-earth. He summoned his son Bormegor and demanded that the marriage be dissolved and his wife banished.

Bormegor defied his father. His love for Eariel was unshakable and he did not share his father's hatred for the other races of Middle-earth and the hundred other kingdoms and groups of Men. However, Lord Denathir would not tolerate the presence of Elven blood in his home, so Bormegor was disinherited and exiled from Minas Arthor with his Half-elven bride.

Together, they wandered north. Neither were afraid of open and wild lands and now Bormegor, with nothing to his name, had to make his own place and fortune in the world. He was strong and fit and had taken his birthsword with him when he left, a christening gift from an uncle. Eariel said of him:

"My love, you suffered much for me and willingly suffer more; yet you do not let it anger you, and neither does this hardship break your spirit. To me you are like the willow tree which bends in the gale, and so I will call you Tatharim."

Her husband liked his new name. With the bitter memory of his father behind them and not even a name to remind them of times past, they wandered for many a week. One spring evening they found themselves nigh the Gladden Fields, for they had followed the Great River past the Golden Wood. There their destiny overtook them. A group of Dwarves led by Halli of Moria, travelling to the Forest Road through Mirkwood, were set upon by a terrible spirit. This wight rose from the miry banks of the river, dripping muddy water that looked like gore, hung about with weeds, and attacked the Dwarves, calling them "Yrch!" and roaring "Elendur will avenge his father!" Six of the Dwarves were struck lifeless

before the cries of the others reached Tatharim and Eariel. Tatharim rushed to their defense and drew his blade, made in Westernesse, and with light glowing from its edge, warded off the spirit, and then struck it down.

Halli, wounded himself but not mortally injured, thanked the Dúnadan with all his heart. Tatharim had earned their eternal gratitude and Halli offered him any reward he cared to name. Tatharim would take none, but stayed with the Dwarves for two days and nights while Eariel helped tend their wounds, and talked with Halli, who was a master mason of his race and who built many great halls in Moria. In the end Halli's determined courteousness wrung from Tatharim a promise to meet again on the spot two years hence, at which time the man would name his reward and Halli would supply it.

The two years passed quickly for the young couple. They had adventured far up the Great River, even to the Grey Mountains, and had won both fame and fortune sacking goblin holds, bandit lairs, troll holes and even slaying a young cold drake menacing a Northman village. They grew fond

of the River and wished to live near it when they settled. Chance put them in the way of Celestir, heir of a Roquen (S. "Knight") who had settled in northern Anórien and been granted various lands. Tatharim and Eariel were persuaded to buy his rights to some lands in the Entwash delta, which pleased him well, since he was then able to hire a large company of men and go off into Wilderland, which was his only desire.

Rowed ashore by a trader, the pair claimed a beautiful parcel of land on the western banks of the Great River. There, on a fine spring day, they met Halli and a small host of his folk, all of whom were returning from Erebor (the Lonely Mountain). Once again, Halli placed himself at their service and this time Eariel spoke for them. She thanked him for his generous offer and continued friendship and finally asked the Dwarf to build them a home. Halli was delighted, for they paid him a great compliment, but stipulated that they should work in secret.

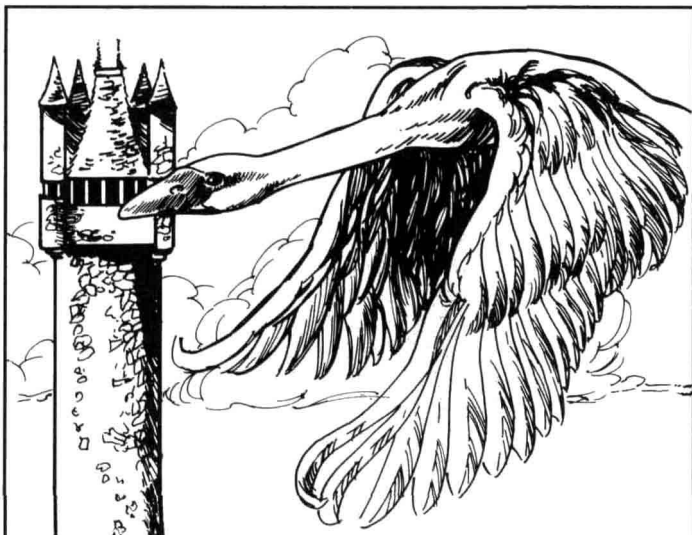
Tatharim presented himself to the Governor of Anórien and had his land titles ratified, then gained permission to build a fortified house upon them. Within a week, Dwarven surveyors had located the ideal site, on the edge of the limestone swell that retains the Slough. This ridge was faulted and the Entwash's channels cut deeply through it at a few points, but upon the

ridge itself there was well-drained land and beautiful scenic moors, isolated by rivers and swampland. In only a few weeks, the Dwarves had quarried stone, cut and shaped it, secured the foundations on a granite plug thrust up through the rock strata, and raised walls. Tatharim hired a team of carpenters and woodwrights who worked ceaselessly to finish and furnish the tower as it rose above the ground. Within three months all was done and the Dwarves left with Eariel and Tatharim's heartfelt thanks. Halli and his folk had created a magnificent abode.

Tatharim and Eariel took the names Lord and Lady Tatharim and named their home Barad Tathren, where willows now grow all about. With some of their riches, she travelled to Osgiliath and brought back a boat laden with all manner of cloth and luxuries, and three maids to serve her. Their residence was completed when Tatharim sent secret word to his father's household and persuaded one of his childhood guardians to come and be his retainer. This was Squire Naurdil, who brought 4 men-at-arms.

Their idyllic life continued for three years. Then Tatharim, tired of hunting ordinary game, heard stories of monsters deep in the Slough who led victims to a watery death. Determined to root them out and put an end





to their menace, he spent seven weeks on their trail, finding one and in a fearsome battle and slaying it. Undaunted, he trailed it back to its lair. There he found three other loathsome creatures — the legendary Mewlips. His shield was rent and torn by their grasping, taloned hands, and his armor split by raking fangs. Nonetheless, he spitted one and then gored a second. But the third Mewlip had magical powers and, cornered in the dank and loathsome cave, it raised its hand and spoke a word of Evil.

A brilliant aura radiated from a gold ring on its scaly finger, and the creature laughed hideously:

"May this web of light I make, signalled by the Word I spake, from your flesh that fair skin take, and in its place become a snake, to swim hence from my cursed lake."

Roiling light enveloped the noble Lord and he screamed...

Fortunately for Lord Tatharim, the Mewlip-mage had stolen the ring and was unsure of its nature. The device was Elven in origin and was possessed of the spirit of its maker. Thus, the ring had for the most part

seduced its holder, and even when the Mewlip's fear and rage broke this spell, the ring would not let its power be perverted and misused. Instead of becoming a snake, Tatharim was turned into a swan.

The Mewlip stood stunned. Then, Tatharim the swan lashed out in fury and used his long neck to snatch the ring from the Mewlip. Fleeing, the enchanted bird flew back to marshes near Barad Tathren, there to wait in despair, bound into this new form. He kept the ring curled inside his webbed foot and for six days flew here and there listlessly, awaiting his fate. Then, at sunset on the sixth day, as he placed it within his foot, the last rays of the sun caught the gold of the ring and shone in his eyes. The light made him blink, and suddenly he was a man again. Overjoyed but desperate, he tried to make for his castle and wife, but the marsh defeated him. At sunset on the next day, he once more fell into the feathered skin of a swan and flapped unhappily over the tower, looking down to see his beloved still looking out over the swamp for him.

He spent the next week in an anxious state. At sunset on the sixth day, he flew to a pool a scant mile from the little castle. Again, to his delight, he changed into a man. All prepared, he strode off into the welcoming arms of his wife. To her he entrusted the ring, since he had neither pocket nor finger as a swan to keep it. She swore to keep his fate secret and to take the ring out onto the battlements at sunset each Ormael so that Tatharim could rejoin her.

Thus Lady Tatharim has lived for seven years, her beauty unaging. For six days she is entertained in the company of her maids while they and her Lord's retainers keep the castle neat, well-run and secure for her. Now, she spends every Oraealon with her husband.

In recent weeks, Eariel has discovered she is at last pregnant, and this has given her great joy. Now her weaving and sewing is to a purpose, her singing more jubilant, and her rides across the moor most happy; that is until today. While cantering in a mock race with her maids along the causeway to the moor, Eariel jumped an unmended gap on a wooden bridge across a small stream. Stumbling, she fell and, when she rose, the golden chain around her neck caught in the rough-hewn wood and broke. The ring dropped from chain and bounced on the bridge. Before Eariel could retrieve it, the ring rolled into the water and was greedily swallowed by a little fish. When the fish reached the lake, it was in turn eaten by a huge, bad-tempered old Wels. The Wels swam off, deep into the Slough.



8.2 THE NPCs

8.21 THE MEWLIP-MAGE

As noted above (see Section 4.0), Minmuian (S. "Mewlips") are evil cannibalistic spirits inhabiting the vilest, dankest, and remotest swamps where light seldom penetrates and the power of the Shadow is great.

*Beside the rotting river-strand
The drooping willows weep
And gloomily the gorcrows stand
Croaking in their sleep.*

The Mewlip-Mage is a spirit superior to his fellows, for he has discovered the Dark Arts and the lore hatched in the foul dens of Sauron and his mentor Morgoth. After many years of study by the light of a black candle flame, he is a powerful sorcerer indeed. Only once has he been thwarted, when Lord Tatharim deprived him of three faithful servants and kin, seven years ago. He has sworn revenge, and for a Mewlip that is no idle threat.

An "ordinary" Mewlip is a strong opponent and the Mewlip-Mage even stronger. Not only does he have improved attacks, he also has the use of numerous spell lists and some special magic items, explained below. Some of these spell lists are designated "Evil," groupings of spells that result in a reversal of any beneficial effects. For instance, *Clean Water* becomes *Contaminated Water* or *Heal 50* becomes *Harm 50*. Naturally, "U"-type spells, when reversed, may be resisted. The Mewlip has two special attacks. Firstly, at any point after he is seen by the characters, he may reveal his "true" form momentarily, this sight being equivalent to a 4th level Fear attack. (See Wights in *MERP*.) Secondly, if the Mewlip's Gr (grapple) attack succeeds, the victim is exposed to the Mewlip's hypnotic eyes and must resist a 12th level trance spell. Once in the trance, the Mewlip will drain blood at 2-20 hits/md for 1-10 rds. However, if the victim resists the trance, he may try to break free, but the Mewlip will attempt to attack with touch-range spells.

Notable Skills: Stalk/Hide 75, Swimming 75, Directed Spells 60, Base Spells 36, Ambush <10 ranks>. **Languages:** Morbeth 5. **Spell Lists:** Essence Hand, Water Law (Evil), Surface Ways (Evil), Protections (Evil), Sound/Darkness Ways {RM—choose 6 "Sorcerer" lists}. **Notable Items:** see below; +15 dagger.

Eelskin Cloak — +10 DB, +10 Stalk/Hide in waterlands, Lightning Armor 1/day for 15 rds — protects vs. all natural light/electricity, +20 to RRs and half damage from spells of light/electricity and criticals 1 degree less severe.

Six Bronze Pins — x2 PP multiplier. Must be pushed into the body at certain points and left in while PP regained. Make Use Item roll each time and consult table below for damage done by each pin:

Failure	1-6 hits
Partial Success	1-4 hits
Near Success	1-3 hits
Success	1 hit
Absolute Success	none

Black Rod of Vorgûdil — a 4" long blackened staff, with Leaping 5x/day (staff must be used as vaulting pole), Fog Call 2x/day, also fires a Smoke Net on command — this is cast like an ordinary net attack (+20 OB). If the net fails to entangle with a critical roll it dissolves next round; otherwise it may remain for up to 10 rounds, at caster's desire. Only one Net can exist at any one time, so a second cannot be cast if a first is still holding someone.

Lady Tatharim



8.22 LADY TATHARIM

Lady Eariel Tatharim's early life has been described elsewhere. She is an attractive Half-elf (S. "Peredhel") who has chosen to be mortal for her husband's sake. Since he is a Dúnadan of noble birth, she anticipates having a long and happy life — at least until Lord Tatharim's encounter with the Mewlip-Mage. Eariel has begged her husband to let her help him, maintaining that together they would be able to defeat the wraith that laid this curse upon him. Tatharim is too concerned for her safety, though, and his confidence too weakened by both his weekly transformations and the painful legacy of defeat. Nothing she can say will convince him.

NOTE: When cast into the swan-shape, Tatharim lost his birthsword and magic armor.

Lady Tatharim thus whiles away the time with sewing and music-making, or else rides out to the moor and hunts with her falcons. She is very adept at many of the skills required of noble ladies, but also has a more secret knowledge which she is learning through letters with one of the great Master-bards of Gondor in Minas Ithil. Eariel has one final secret at this time: she is pregnant and carrying the child of Lord Tatharim. She is only three months into her term, so the condition is not immediately noticeable, but she will be taking greater care of herself.

Notable Skills: Ride 73, Stalk/Hide 73, Read Runes 68, Swim 53, Falconry 50, Singing/Music 50, Track 48, Perception 48, Use Items 43, Embroidery 40, Climb 38, Directed Spells 28, Leadership/Influence 25, Base Spells 8. **Languages:** Sindarin 5, Westron 5, Quenya 5, Adûnaic 4, Bethetur 3, Eothrik 3, Atliduk 3. **Spell Lists:** Lore, Controlling Songs, Spell Ways (to 5th level), Spirit Mastery (to 5th level). **Notable Items:** Book of Runes — 27 pages, first 24 are 1st-3rd level spells from each Mage list (25% chance any given rune has been used), last 3 give +30% to anyone rolling to learn the Spell Ways list; Box of Firelighting — box of copper and silver which casts Woodfires 2x/day, made by Dwarves; Ivory Hand — carved image of hand of great beauty, life size, which can heal wounds by laying on (Heal 10 4x/day OR Regeneration 1 1x/day).

8.23 SQUIRE NAURDIL

The Squire is a scholarly Ranger from South Ithilien, once an older companion of Lord Tatharim, who schooled young Bormegor in many of the arts required by an adventuring lifestyle. He is now getting on and has greying hair, although he is fit enough in most ways. His main problem is a curse laid on him unawares by a woman he did not realise he had slighted. Naurdil suffers from Panic and will flee in any personally dangerous situation unless he makes a RR vs. 12th level. Naurdil thinks he just suffers from blackouts and will not remember anything about the period of panic afterwards. He will not admit that he suffers these lapses to anyone, and he has become very good at covering his infirmity. Naurdil now insists that he either act alone or he avoids action altogether. The Squire is in charge of Barad Tathren, being both quartermaster and sergeant of the men-at-arms.

Notable Skills: Track 80, Rowing 60, Swim 50, Perception 45, Ride 45, Climb 40, Natural History 40, Stalk/Hide 40. **Languages:** Westron 5, Adûnaic 4, Sindarin 4, Quenya 1. **Spell Lists:** Surface Ways, Nature's Guises. **Notable Items:** +10 composite bow (of non-rusting steel), non-magical.

8.24 GILWEN, IDRIL, NANYA

Lady Tatharim's maids are all quite pretty and devoted to Eariel. Naturally, they wonder with a burning curiosity why their Master and Mistress are only together one night each week, but have as yet been unable to discover the reason. All three come from Osgiliath, and are the younger daughters of well-to-do people there (they are of lesser Dúnadan families) and all have long, dark hair. Since they also dress quite similarly, they are hard for others to tell apart. All three will be excited to see anyone new at the castle and will vie for attention.

Notable Skills: Dance or Music 35, Sing or Acting 30, Craft 30 (e.g., sewing, cookery), Ride 25. **Languages:** Westron 5, Sindarin 4, Adûnaic 3.

8.25 ATANO, DAIRUIN, TELETHAL, LITH

The four retainers under Squire Naurdil are lesser Dúnedain men recruited in Anórien or Dor Rhúnen. They serve only for a year before being released although some have asked to stay for a further term of duty. Lord Tatharim pays well to make sure his wife is protected but the retainers also function as staff to run the castle, seeing to the horses, supplies, cleaning and maintenance. These chores keep the men busy enough, and they have one day off each week, during which they are free to go hunting or do whatever they will. Squire Naurdil part-jokingly calls them "the Order of the Swan" since for some reason his master insists that all take an oath never to slay any swan in the delta area.

The men have smooth, light complexions and dark hair, and they wear uniform of dark blue and silver, with soft leather armor. Each carries a special eket (shortsword), which he is allowed to keep at the end of their year as a bonus.

Dairuin is quite a handsome lad and has slept with both Gilwen and Nanya; this has made Atano very jealous and the two seldom speak to each other, but otherwise the men get on very well.

Notable Skills: Ride 30, Swim 20, Rowing/Hunting 20. **Languages:** Westron 5, Sindarin or Eothrik 3, Adûnaic or Sagathig 2. **Notable Items:** +5 eket.

8.26 HÚWO

Húwo is an intelligent owl (a Farithron or Short-eared Owl) dwelling around the fringes of the Slough and venturing into the marsh to hunt each day. Unlike other owls, the Farithryn are not nocturnal, and they also can speak with other intelligent beings, such as Men and Elves. Although they have their own tongue, they know some Sindarin (rank 1 or 2). Húwo is particularly curious about Men and invariably approaches them in a friendly fashion, especially if he senses the use of magic. He will take to the characters if they feed him fresh bits of meat, or perhaps some live voles. Húwo knows much about the marshes and may be able to help them now or at some later date by leading them if they are lost, by telling them where to find a place or person (e.g., Josherë), or by helping them trail the Mewlip-Mage. Húwo will typically turn up if the characters are despairing of what to do next.

Notable Skills: Perception 75 (100 at dusk/dawn), Track 60, Stalk 60, Hide 50. **Languages:** Beth-i-Farithryn 4, Sindarin 2.

8.27 JOSHERË

Josherë is a Marshman who roams the Ethir Onodló in a magic covered coracle (self-propelled, carries 280 lbs) that resembles nothing more than a giant walnut shell. He is ancient with a great fund of knowledge and lore concerning the marshlands, and is also a powerful Animist. In appearance he is very hairy — he has a long, straggly beard and thick, wild hair arranged in a bushy grey mane — and wears skins and furs. Most people would consider him completely mad. If he meets the characters he is quite likely to be friendly and helpful if they give him either gifts of herbs or magic or promises to help the Marshmen or wildlife in Ethir Onodló

NOTE: Such promises could be bound with an Oath, any oath-breaker suffering a 9th level curse if RR failed, the Oath requiring 9 PP from Josherë or PCs. Alternatively, the characters may try an Influence roll, which is Very Hard (-20).

Josherë's speech is often difficult to understand and he may get irritable if he has to keep repeating himself. If really annoyed, or attacked, he will call on his "marsh friends" to drive off or delay attackers while he escapes.

Notable Skills: Perception 60, Weather-watching 55, Star-gazing 55, Foraging 55, Base Spells 18. **Languages:** Ninnelen 5, Westron 5, Sindarin 5. **Spell Lists:** Detection Mastery, Surface Ways, Bone! Muscle Ways, Blood Ways, Purifications, Nature's Lore, Plant Mastery, Animal Mastery, Direct Channeling. **Notable Items:** supplies of all useful herbs (chance = 75 +1- Difficulty Code).



8.3 THE AREA

8.31 BARAD TATHREN LOCATIONS

I. Barad Tathren.

a. **Castle.** The castle is fully detailed in the next section.

b. **Bridge & Gatehouse.** The bridge from the gatehouse to the castle is built of finely jointed limestone and is about 60' long. It spans this distance in two arches, each low and graceful, with a support built on a pile in the lake. Two rowboats are moored beneath the bridge. The Gatehouse consists of two round towers, each 15' across and 35' high, with a stable building attached to the southern tower. The towers are joined by a pointed arch. Between the towers are two portcullis-like gates, each 5' wide and 14' tall, made of timber shod with iron, with pointed upper and lower edges. The gates are locked with a large key. This lock is Extremely Hard (-30) to pick. Each gatehouse has a ground floor and upper floor. The upper floor of the north tower is a watch post, the ground floor has stores and a cramped workshop. The south tower has a mews upstairs (for the Lady's hunting birds) and a tack room and stores below for the stables which adjoin. There are eight horses stabled in the stone stalls.

c. **Causeway.** The road is made of split tree trunks and limestone chippings and gives a firm, safe route over the marsh for horses and those on foot. It is 15' or so wide.

d. **Creek and Reedbed.** This lissgarath is free water with great stands of tall reeds and rushes. It is frequented by cranes and herons.

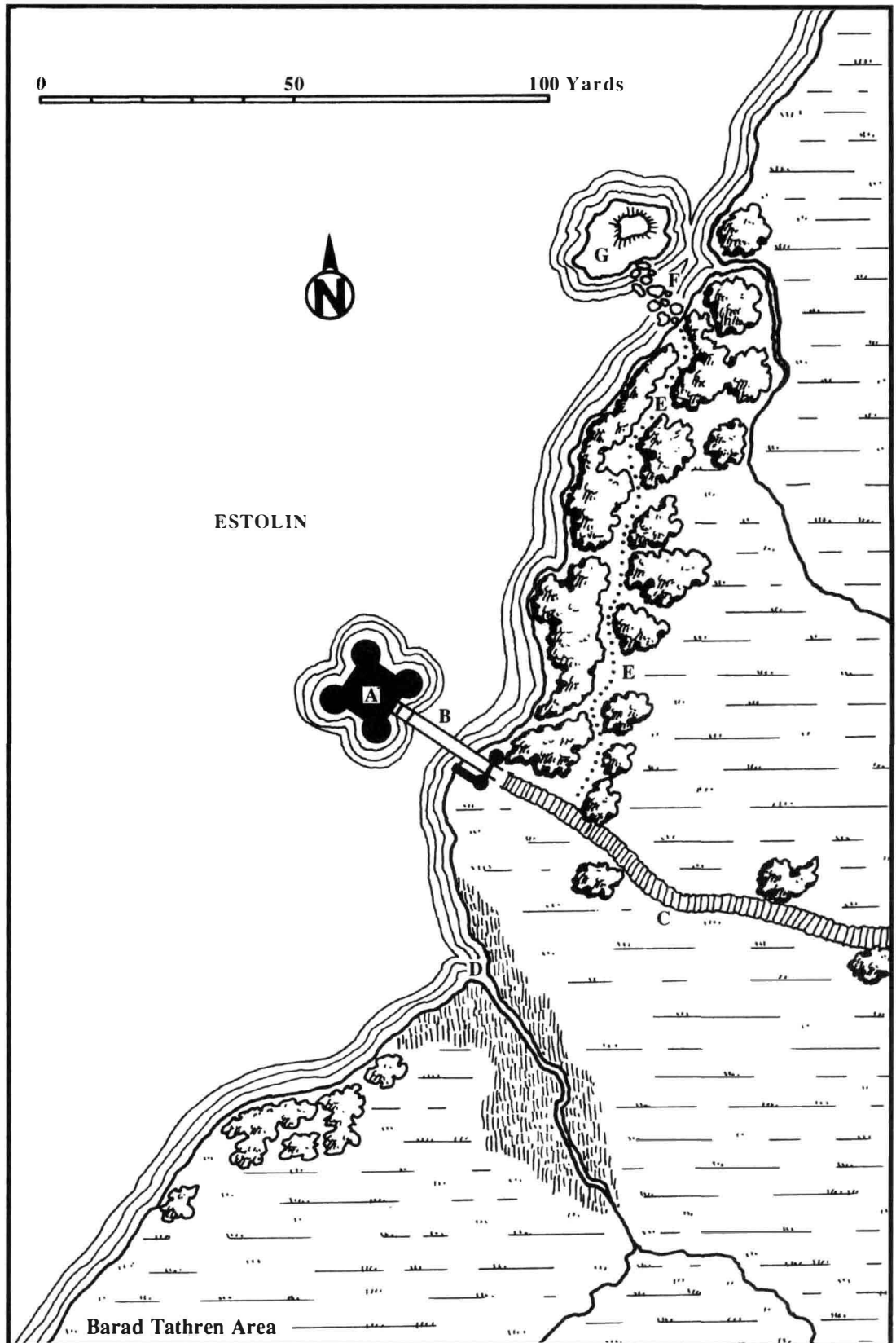
e. **Willow thicket.** Willows grow along much of the shore; the ground is solid and between the trees a path runs, marked by small white stones.

f. **Stepping stones.** Broad slabs of mottled stone have been set into the lakebed to provide dry footing across to a small island. The stones are arranged in a zig-zag pattern.

g. **Haudh-en-Naug.** This tiny islet called by the castle-dwellers Tollin Naug (S. "Dwarf Isle") has a small raised mound on it, the grave of one of Halli's followers, who died of a poisonous snake bite while working on the castle. He was buried here and the Haudh (S. "Barrow") raised over him; now it is a favored spot for summer afternoons. There is no stone to mark the grave and nothing of value was buried with the Dwarf.

2. **Estolin.** Estolin (S. "Peaceful Lake") was named by Eariel when she first saw it, and the name has remained in use ever since. The lake

is divided by a flat promontory for most of the year and is about 1 miles long and just over mile wide. In winter it freezes over for several months, being for the most part very shallow, and the castle's inhabitants enjoy skating across its glassy surface. There are not great numbers of fish, but enough to support a good population of birds and other creatures both in the lake and around its shores, such as otters and harriers. The deepest channel in the lake joins the two streams at its north and south ends, running down the eastern side of the lake past the castle.



3. Tol Farenir. In the middle of the northern half of Estolin is Tol Farenir (S. "Harriers Island") some 200 yards long and 120 yards wide at its broadest. The island is another upthrust of hard stone like the one on which Barad Tathren was built, although rather larger. It rises up to 30' high at the center and the soil supports a few sycamores. In their branches nest several pairs of screaming harriers and a few other birds of prey. They nest here to avoid the predations of creatures who steal eggs. The harriers are spectacular to watch as they fish.

4. Willow meads. The thickets of willow which line the eastern shore are pleasant and provide a safer footing than the swampland elsewhere which is boggy and treacherous. The willow roots form a dense mass carpeted with grasses and mosses even where below them the soil is totally waterlogged. There are many useful herbs and fungi to be found growing in the thickets. There are other willow thickets deeper within the Slough which are of a totally different character. Their branches droop upon the ground limply, allowing choking vines and slimy weeds to creep up and

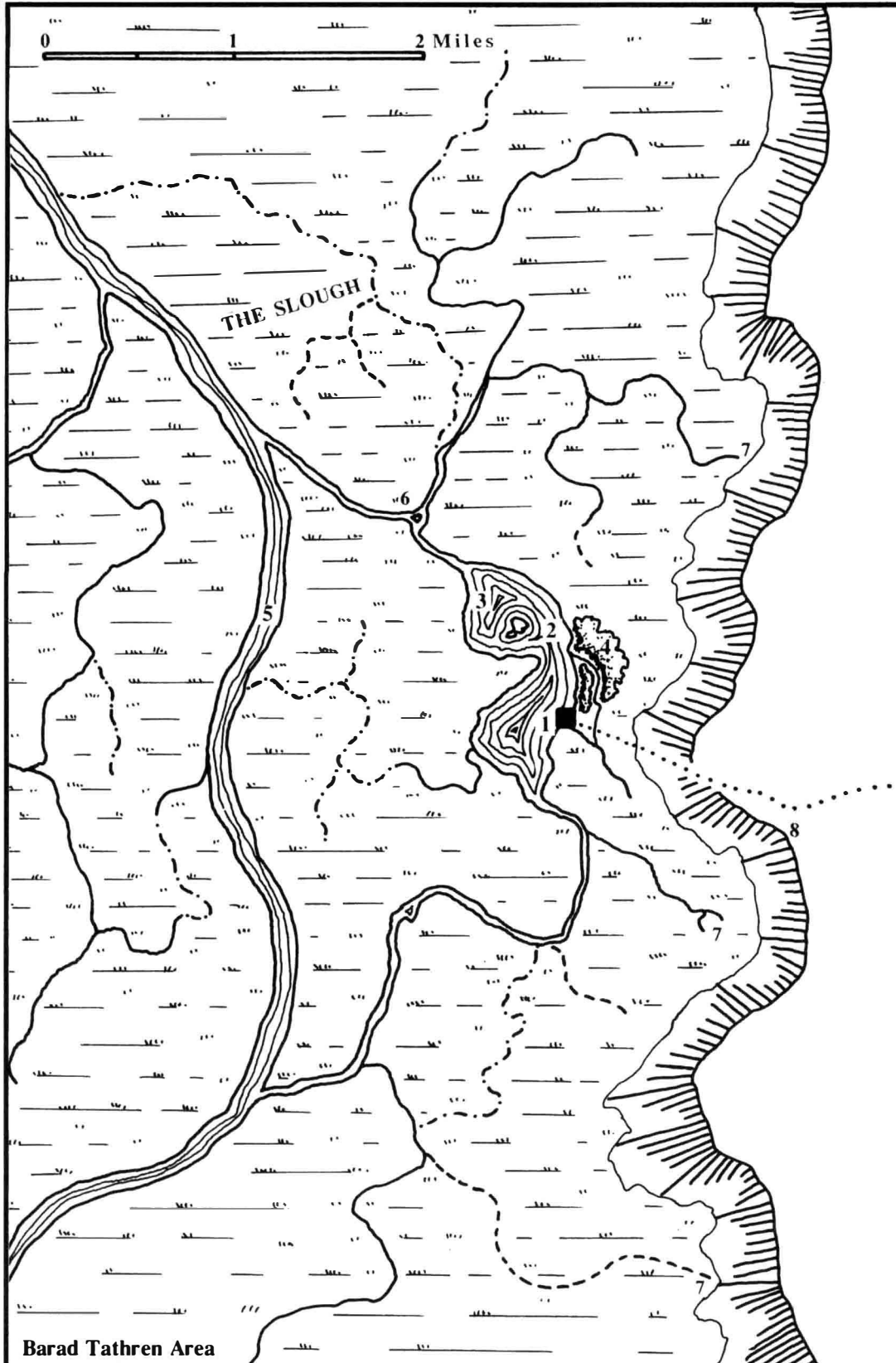
hang tendrils; the ground underfoot squelches and sucks and the light from above is filtered by thick growths and lichenous fronds to a blue pallor. Beware such groves, for they may be the homes of Mewlips and other spirits, and even the trees may be awake with an evil malice.

5. Major channel. This channel is a wide loop connecting many streams from the Slough with the Enn-Hír. It is broad and very slow-moving, mostly choked on the surface with pondweed and waterlilies. Large dark shapes can often be seen moving beneath them...

6. Reed Isle. This isle at the confluence of two streams is thick with the short bogreeds of the Slough which bear tiny green-white flowers halfway up their narrow spikes each spring. The isle is avoided by the locals for two reasons: there are many Lhyg Loeg (S. "Marsh Adders") with their curling burrows on the isle; and there are swarms of Huilókir (S. "Hummerhorns") nesting in papery structures suspended off the ground by the reeds. The Hummerhorns will swarm at anything moving along either stream.

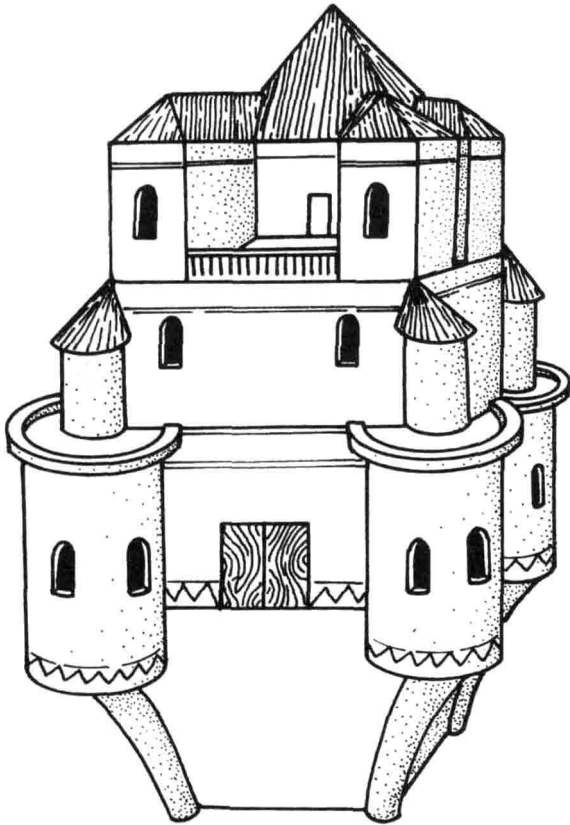
7. Sink holes. At these points in the bogland the land starts to rise, at the edge of the swamp and the foot of the limestone swell. Streams flow into pools and vanish into underground holes and fissures, flowing between the jointed limestone to emerge on the lower slopes of the ridge and run down into the Anduin. Some people say that a race of Water Fays dwells under the ridge in watery caves and brooks. Stories recall times when these spirits emerged from sink holes on moonless nights in order to seduce and ensnare Men.

8. Scarp. The limestone swell resulting from an ancient fault and the geological upheavals at the end of the First Age has blocked the Onodló and made it carve new channels and abandon old ones, all the time filling the land between with mire and marsh. The upland itself is well-drained and grassy with some small copses of alder, birch and beech and swathes of bracken and heather. It is ideal hunting country, with a wide variety of small mammals and game birds. A few pairs of Golden Eagles from the White Mountains live here.

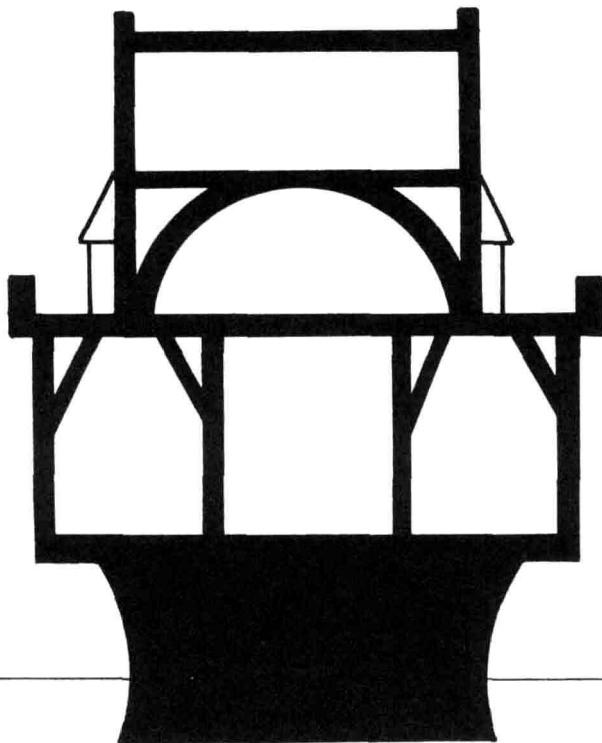


8.32 LAYOUT OF BARAD TATHREN

View of Barad Tathren



Cross-section



GROUND FLOOR

1. **Bridge.** The bridge from the gatehouse on the bank is just over 60' long and 7' wide. This slender span is edged with a low wall topped with a carved balustrade of zig-zag (dog's-tooth) motif. At the end of the bridge are two pillars topped with silver-painted willow trees.

2. **Drawbridge.** The drawbridge is wooden and 7' square. Hinged at the castle side, it rises when operated by a clever Dwarven mechanism that is operated from inside the castle (to the side of the door, 3). This device uses a counterweight set below the level of the bridge rather than chains mounted above.

3. **Door.** The imposing entrance to the castle is a pair of tall doors of pale willow wood, each 12" thick. There is a small spy hole in each door. They can be both locked and barred from the inside. To the left of the door is a winch and steel chain which will lower or raise the drawbridge, contained within a stone housing. The doors are patterned with an interlocked design of zig-zags.

4. **Great Hall.** The central area of the ground floor is dominated by this hall. Short arcades run down either side with entrances to the corner towers curtained off with rich tapestries in gold, ruby and green. There are three tables set around a fireplace, and seating for up to twenty-two guests plus the Lord and Lady, who occupy grand, canopied chairs. All the furniture is decorated with willow leaves and simple, serrated lines. Two candelabra hang from the 28' high ceiling. The ceiling is barrel-vaulted with eight ribs to bear the weight of the higher floors. All the tableware is stored in chests under the double staircase.

5. **East Tower.** There are four corner towers which project over the lake on cunningly-designed vaulted pedestals. The circular towers have hexagonal vaulting inside to bear the weight of the central tower from above. Thus, there are six rib-pillars around the walls, all reaching up to meet at the center with fan vaults between them. The east tower is the Morning Room, receiving the early light, and is decked out in bright oranges and cherry-pink, with two small tables, a breakfast table, numerous chairs and workbaskets — for the morning is the time when the ladies of the castle try to get all the chores done, so that the afternoon might be free for enjoyment.

6. **South Tower.** This tower is the day room, furnished in light woods and pale shades of blue, green and sandy yellow. In winter it is warmed by a good fire; in summer it is cooled by silken shades fitted over the windows. There are embroidery frames, musical instruments, comfortable chairs, sideboards with games and materials for writing, wide brass tables with flowers and bowls of fruits and pitchers of drink.

7. **West Tower.** This tower has been divided to make two rooms. The evening room is beautifully decorated with russets and reds and powdery pinks to perfectly catch the sun's setting rays across the lake and marshes. The views on a fine evening are spectacular indeed. On better nights, the lake appears to flare up, ablaze with color, and the sun ponderously lowers itself into the mire, while flocks of birds wheel and turn overhead.

8. **Stores.** The other part of the tower has been partitioned off to make a large storeroom packed with everything the inhabitants might need, from tools to raw materials, from food to timber, from wine to wax.

9. **North Tower.** This tower also looks out over the lake. It is much more simply appointed, with whitewashed walls and dark, square furniture. Here lodge Squire Naurdil, along with the four retainers of the castle. Each retainer has a bed and cupboard, a chest for his personal effects, and a large wall cupboard that holds their arms and martial accoutrements.

10. **Squire Naurdil's Room.** This "room" is merely partitioned off of the circular chamber by hanging draperies which lend the only color to the otherwise stark area. The tapestries depict the victory of Isildur at Barad-dûr and the deaths of Elendil and Gil-galad. Naurdil's room has a good bed with a desk (for castle record-keeping), easy chair and low table bearing a crystal glass decanter and goblets presented to him by Eariel one year, a tallboy and dresser and a special stand for his armor and livery. Naurdil has a small personal treasury (a stout iron box with two tiny locks) containing 350gp and 600sp.

11. **Staircase.** The double staircase sweeps up to the middle floor impressively with neither support underneath nor handrail. The stairs simply project from the walls, cunningly cut as part of the same stones. Beneath the stair a double window of stained glass lights the high table of the Great Hall.

MIDDLE FLOOR

12. Landing. The landing consists of a Y-shaped passage joining the staircase from the lower floor with the spiral stair and the south and east tower balconies. The floor is stone, the walls whitewashed and set with lamps and candlesticks for light at night.

13. Guest Chambers. These bedchambers are handsomely appointed for any guests that might visit — admittedly an infrequent occurrence. Each has two double beds, chairs, a fireplace, glazed windows admitting plentiful light, rugs strewn across the floors and drapes and paintings hung upon the walls. Each also has a private washroom and privy behind a wooden wall. The rooms will be set with flowers and greenery if visitors are expected, and fruit and drink will be placed on the rosewood tables.

14. Tower Balconies. Atop each of the round towers is a three-quarter circle balcony. The balconies are floored with intricately interlocking limestone paving and have a 3' high wall with marble balustrade all the way around, cut into a shallow zig-zag. Around the balconies are set flowering plants in pottery and stone urns, and lightweight furniture which

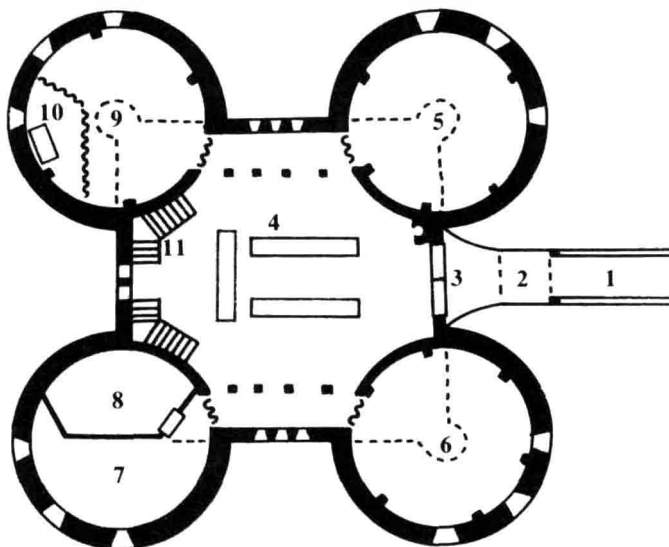
may be taken outside is stored in the adjoining rooms. The balconies are all accessed by elegant doors of willow-wood set in pointed archways chiselled with the dog's-tooth motif; the doors are usually locked, the keys hanging inside. The locks are of Medium (-0) difficulty to pick.

15. Ante Rooms. These small rooms are simply to protect against cold drafts in winter and provide a little storage space for light chairs and the like. The keys to the balcony doors may be found hanging here.

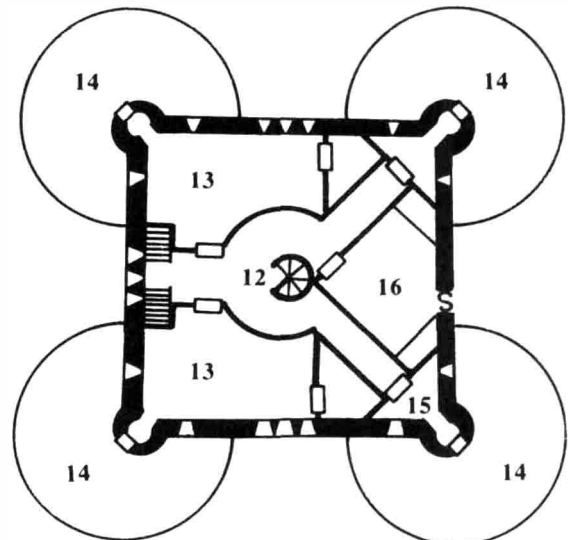
16. Kitchen. This room has a large fireplace, an iron range and a baking oven set into the wall, as well as preparing tables, washing sinks (and a large laundry tub) and shelves where all the usual kitchenware and utensils are hung or stood. Two huge floor-to ceiling cupboards line two short walls; these hold a mass of food stores, since supplies are seldom brought in. The provisions are brought up to the kitchen by a block and tackle concealed within a secret door which is set over the main doors (see 3. above). This door is invisible from the outside and may only be opened from the kitchen side.

NOTE: The middle floor is 14' high.

The Ground Floor



The Middle Floor



UPPER FLOOR

17. Library. The upper floor is reached only by the central spiral stair. This opens onto two arms of a wide and light room. The western arm is the library assembled by Tatharim and Eariel. Not all the shelves are full, yet. Most of the books are historical tales in verse and prose form, some as ballads and songs. There are also some books on natural history, geography and other cultures. In a secret compartment of the bookcase beside the stair are Eariel's books of Essence magic, listing the spells she has learned, and other volumes dealing with general aspects of magic, such as the casting of spells, the use of magic bound into items and the writing of the great runes or Turowar. Here is stored the *Book of Runes*, the *Parma-ne-Taith*. (See Eariel's character description.)

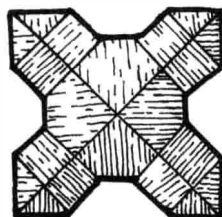
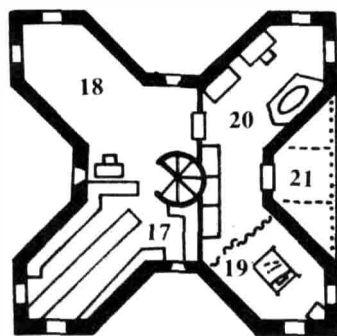
18. Empty Chamber. This arm of the room has been recently cleared, ostensibly because Eariel decided she wanted to fit it out properly as a reading room. Actually, she will soon tell her staff that she is expecting a baby and turn it into a nursery. There is still a large desk of elm for anyone using the library.

19. Lord & Lady's Chamber. This half of the upper floor is Tatharim and Eariel's private domain. Their magnificent double bed, complete with canopy, is set in the southern arm of the room, behind golden silk drapes. The bed is hung with nets of gold and the sheets are of satin and lace, pale gold and silver in color. Along each side wall are four gold lamps burning scented oil and at the foot of the room is a maplewood dresser with a gilt framed mirror. In the dresser are numerous precious items of jewellery, perfumes, silken clothing and the like.

20. In this part of the **Chamber** is a huge three-part wardrobe hung with all the gowns and robes of the noble couple. There is also a dressing table and two chairs, a cot for one of the maids to sleep on at night, should Lady Tatharim require anything, and a wooden platform on which is set a gilded wooden bathtub and brass water-heater. The floor is strewn with ankle-deep golden and white furs. There is a door with two glass panels leading out onto the upper balcony. The door is kept locked and fits very tightly, its lock being Extremely Hard (-30) to pick.

21. Upper Balcony. The Upper Balcony is the highest vantage point of the little castle, rising a little over 50' above the waters of the lake. It is adorned with honey-colored tiles underfoot and a gilded wrought iron railing along its outer edge. In summer a golden canopy can be raised on wooden poles, shading the balcony for the ladies who gather there to drink cooling sherbets.

The Upper Floor



The Roof

8.4 THE PLOT

This adventure is concerned with the recovery of the ring which Lady Tatharim has lost. There are several parts to the adventure and a final exciting climax, which may not, after all, be the end...

8.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

First, you will have to get the player characters to Barad Tathren. This may be accomplished in any number of ways. They might have previously met Lady Tatharim in the marshes, or on the Onodló during one of her rare trips away from the castle, and be invited by her to stay. They might lose their way and be found by someone from the castle, who leads them there to rest before continuing on their way. The characters might even stumble on the tower by accident while on some other mission or adventure.

AT THE TOWER

The characters will almost certainly be invited to share a meal with Lady Tatharim, and she will invite them to stay the night. There is entertainment in the form of music and poetry (the characters may be invited to contribute) before they retire. Later, when her maids and retainers are safely out of the way, Eariel will urgently request to speak with the characters. If necessary, she will *Influence* or *Charm* one of them secretly and so induce them to listen to her. She will nearly break down in spilling out her tale of woe: how her husband is cursed to be with her for only one out of every seven days, and now is surely doomed to be lost forever as she has lost the magic ring which allows his return — and she is bearing his child.

NOTE: *This desperate plea should persuade the characters to aid this lady in distress. If any remain hard-hearted, of course, they might have to roll a RR vs. a 10th lvl Quest spell. In such a case, they must resist in order to ignore or argue against helping Eariel.*

Eariel will tell the characters all that she knows: that the ring was a band of gold set with minute gemstones of shifting hues, and that she lost it crossing a bridge over a stream in the marsh. This stream (see Area Map) passes through the marsh and the willow thickets into Estolin.

SEARCHING FOR THE RING

The ring has been swallowed by a small fish which in turn has been eaten by an ancient Wels. Searching in the stream will yield no results, although characters entering the water might be attacked by a lamprey or a few leeches. The Wels bearing the ring swims off, leaving Estolin by the north stream, past the Reed Isle and down the wide channel into the Slough. There it swims for several days before eventually making its way back, by devious routes, to end up in Estolin again towards the end of the sixth day.

Of course, characters might themselves enter the Slough trying to use Location spells or other means. Give them a chance proportional to the range of the spell to detect the ring once per day, but remember that by the time they reach the spot where it was detected, the Wels will probably have moved on. In the Slough are quite a few nasty creatures only too willing to annoy them: snakes, large fish, pond bats, minks, more snakes, blue terrapins, leeches and flukes, even more snakes, gorcrows and hoptas, plus even worse things at night. It is very unlikely that they will come across anyone in the Slough other than on the large, direct channels used by boats. Two exceptions are given below.

MERHN-ANA-MIVEN

The characters may encounter this Wose-woman anywhere within the marshes, walking along one of the channels. Her origins are obscure. (Some say she is an outcast from the communities of the Drúadan Forest in Anórien.) She has walked the marshes for perhaps fifteen or twenty years, and is known of, but seldom spoken about by many locals. When the characters meet her, they are likely to be surprised, for she can walk on water — or rather appear to. Merhn uses 20" long stilts with webbed bottoms which are ideal for moving swiftly across bog, along stream beds or through tall reeds.

Merhn speaks only Pûkael. When she encounters the characters, she will instinctively know what they are about and stop to help them. Communicating in sign language, she will draw a ring in the air, make a swallowing motion, and throw them a fish from a bag she carries. Then she will pronounce Joshere's name before making off into the distance at

a rapid speed. The fish she throws them is edible, but its flesh contains a mildly narcotic hallucinogen. If anyone eats it, they will have visions of a huge Wel swimming around with a gold gleam shining between its repulsively wide, fat lips.

JOSHERĒ

The characters may be led to JasherĒ the Marshman Animist by Merhna-Miven and/or Húwo the short-eared owl (see Character Descriptions). It may take a couple of days searching; naturally the characters can borrow a boat (or two) from Lady Tatharim to get about in if they have none of their own. The priest will be strange and moody, and the strongest impression of him to be had will be dark and foreboding. He will not answer questions directly, offering instead unilluminating and infuriating observations. Notably, he will tell them that they “*have come from a black area of Gloaminghollow*” and warn them, stating: “*if you return to Darklemere, beware of the Evil One’s lair.*”

Hopefully, this should give them cause to think again about the true nature of Lady Tatharim and her tale of men turning into swans. Can she really want this powerful ring for so innocent a purpose? Finally, if the characters gain JasherĒ’s confidence, he will tell them that to find the ring, they should “go fishing from the walls of the castle.

RETURN TO BARAD TATHREN

Eariel will be surprised and resentful if the characters return without the ring, which is fairly inevitable. She will become quite sarcastic and acidic if they suggest pursuing JasherĒ’s notion, but will not obstruct them. Her attitude won’t allay their dawning suspicions of her.

Fishing from the balcony will produce no results until the late afternoon of the sixth day (although ordinary fish may be caught). Then, all at once a fisher gets a bite; a huge fish has taken the bait. The fish soon proves too big to be caught by rod alone and a character will have to get into the moat to slay it. In the stomach of this huge Wels is the lost ring.

TOO LATE?

After all their efforts, the characters just fail to get the ring to Eariel before the last edge of the sun disappears below the distant, wet horizon. As the light starts to fade from the reddened western skies there is a terrible churning of the moat waters lapping the castle’s feet and from the waves appears a hideous figure come to claim his bride. This is the Mewlip-Mage, who scented the ring like a roast dinner the day before and trailed it here and waited for the sun to depart through the Doors of Night so he could manifest himself. The Mewlip has passed through Estolin before and seen the fine lady with his ring, yes, seen her and desired her, and yet been unable to possess her for the ring protects her all unwitting. Now the moment of her lord’s appearance has passed, failed for the first time, and he is prepared to strike, to feast on Man-flesh this night in a bridal bower.

THE RING OF THE MELDAIN

The ring on which the story turns, a gold band set with Alcamiren (Q. “Glorious Jewels”), was forged in the second age by the Elven smiths of Ost-in-Edhil. A powerful talisman made in the later days of the settlement, its maker suspected that there was a hand of Evil at work among the Jewelsmiths and sought to protect all good things against him. The ring has the following powers:

- x2 PP multiplier;
- +33 Essence RRs;
- 1x/day Permanence, a spell which changes any spell with a time duration (i.e., not instant or requiring concentration) to permanent duration, although sometimes with limitations;
- 2x/day Dispel Evil Essence at 33rd level;
- 3x/day Repel Evil at 33rd level; this spell will make all evil beings wish to leave the immediate vicinity of the wearer by making all their activity at -5 per round spent within 20’R;
- 4x/day Perceive Power at 33rd level.
- The ring is sentient and will act of its own accord even if the wearer is unaware of a danger, using power points available through its x2 multiplier capacity (i.e., the ring has as many PP as the wearer has, unless the wearer is aware of the effect and uses them him/herself).

OUTCOME

The characters may fight the Mewlip-Mage wherever it goes. Regardless, it will try to seize Eariel and drag her into the lake. It will use all the resources at its disposal and if it manages to escape them for a time, the sky will soon grow dark and give it complete advantage. If things are going badly in the fight, Húwo could return and give the characters helpful advice, or swan-Tatharim might dive from the skies and give them a moment’s respite.

If things look hopeless for the Mewlip-Mage, he will turn tail and dive into the inky waters to swim across the lake and make his way through the Slough to his lair. The characters should be encouraged to track him down and finish him off, if at all possible. Eariel will not wish them to take the ring, since she would rather be sure of seeing her husband at least once a week rather than never again.

The characters cannot expect much help from the castle’s maids and retainers. Squire Naurdil is apt to run away from a good fight while Lady Tatharim is pregnant. The retainers figure they aren’t paid to fight loathsome swamp-wights and the maids merely get in the way, or are horribly frightened by the monster (and may even be taken hostage).

8.42 REWARDS

Once the Mewlip-Mage is killed, Lord Tatharim is restored to his original form; the curse is lifted. He will be able to lead the characters to the creature’s lair if they cannot find it, and there bestow on them all its treasures other than his own birthsword and armor. You should work out what is in this treasure according to the norms of your campaign adventures — it might include a handsome sword (+20 and doubles Tracking & Stalk/Hide bonuses for Ranger and Scout characters), lots of jewellery, a painted bronze shield +10 with Deflections 2x/day, a casket containing six potions, a long-handled axe able to cut a tree down in but three rounds plus one round for every foot the trunk is wide, a belt of silver leaves which adds 5 to the wearer’s PR and +25 to their skill bonus for Dance or Acting. There will also be a hoard of gold, silver and other precious materials.

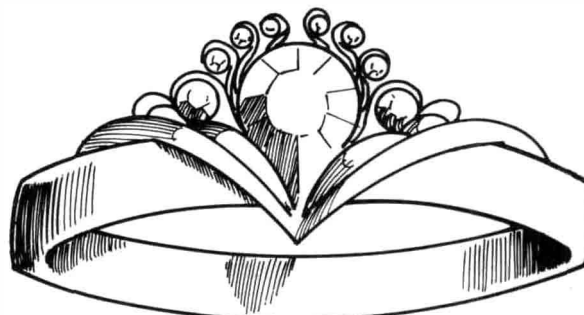
8.43 OTHER AIDS AND OBSTACLES

In addition to everything described above, there are the natural dangers of the Slough, a foul mere in its own right. The characters can expect to encounter delays and threats quite often. These might be as harmless as chickweed and skeeters or much worse. Boats can be upset by irritated sturgeon and those in the water bitten by pike or swimming snakes. Roll regularly against the diseases borne by insects, bats, the bad water, and the leeches and flukes.

NOTE: See *ICE’s Dagorlad and the Dead Marshes* for some good diseases; also applicable are Angurth and Vemaak in the *MERP* rulebook.

Help can come from very strange and unexpected sources (such as those discussed above). A very charismatic player character might be able to persuade Naurdil or one of the castle’s retainers to accompany them. Alternatively you could have the party encounter Cormacar the Ranger or some other, more powerful, NPC able to assist them. Naturally, for this help they should forfeit a share of the rewards.

The Ring of the Meldain



9.0 TABLES

9.1 ENCOUNTER TABLE

Encounter	Entwash Vale	Fens & Bogs	The Midden	The Slough	Lower Delta	East Emnet
Chance (%)	20%	20%	15%	25%	10%	20%
Distance (miles)	2	2	.5	.5	1	5
Time (hours)	2	4	1	1	2	4
Settlements Etc.						
Ruins	01	01-02	01	—	01	01-02
Hut/shieling	02-03	03	—	—	02	03-04
House/Farmstead	04	—	—	—	—	05
Trail	05-08	04	02	—	03	06-07
People						
Farming Folk	09-10	05	—	—	—	08-09
Herders	11-13	06	—	—	—	10-13
Country Folk	14-16	07	—	—	04-05	14-16
Fur Trappers	—	08	03-05	01-02	—	—
Hawker/Falconer	17	09-10	—	—	06	—
Fishermen	18-21	—	06-11	—	07	—
Shrimper/Shell Fisher.	22	—	12-13	—	08	—
Smugglers/Rogues	23	11-12	14-16	03-04	09-10	17
Hunters	24	13-16	17-21	05	11-15	18-20
Marshmen	—	17	22	06-07	16-17	—
Croppers/Gatherers	25	18	—	—	—	21
Reed-/Peat-cutters	26-27	19-23	23-27	—	—	—
Patrol	28	24	28	—	18	22
Customs Men	29	—	—	—	19	—
Travellers	30-32	25	29	—	20-21	23
Traders	33-34	26	30	—	22-23	24
Wool-/Grain-carrier	35-36	—	—	—	24-25	25-26
Flying Creatures						
Insects/Swarm	37-38	27-28	31-34	08-12	26	27
Hummerhorns	—	29	35	13-14	—	—
Wading Birds	39-40	30-33	36-39	15-20	27-28	—
Swimming/Fishing Birds	41-45	34-35	40-46	21-27	29	—
Birds of Prey	46	36	47-48	28-29	31-32	28-29
Bats	47	37	49-50	30-31	33	30
Other Flying Creatures	48	38	51-52	32-33	34	31
Reptiles & Amphibians						
Small Reptiles	49	39-41	53-54	34-36	35-36	32-33
Poisonous Snakes	50	42-44	55-56	37-40	37	34
Leeches/Flukes	51	—	57-58	41-44	38	—
Turtles	52	45	59	45	39	—
Amphibians	53-54	46-49	60-62	46-49	40	—
Vodyanoi	—	—	62	50-51	—	—
Mammals						
Otters/Minks/Rodents	55	50-52	63-65	52-53	41-43	35-36
Boars/Bears/Deer	56	53	66-67	54-55	44-47	37-43
Wild Dogs/Tykes	57	54-55	68-69	56	48-50	44-46
Fish						
Eels	58	—	70-72	57-59	51	—
Lampreys	—	—	73	60-61	52	—
Medium Fish	59-60	—	74-77	62-66	53-54	—
Large Fish	61	—	78-79	67-69	55	—
Huge Fish	—	—	—	70-71	—	—
Non-Mannish Races						
Mewlips	—	—	80	72-73	—	—
Orc Units	62	56	81	74-75	56-57	47-49
Other Beings	63-64	57-58	82-83	76-77	58-60	50
Hazards						
Artificial Hazards†	65-72	59-68	84-91	78-87	61-68	51-64
Terrain Hazards‡	73-75	67-73	92-96	88-95	67-73	65-70
Natural Events‡‡	76-00	74-00	97-00	96-00	74-00	71-00

KEY TO THE ENCOUNTER TABLE

† = traps, surface ruins & debris, etc.

‡ = bog, quicksand, streams, rapids, undergrowth, etc.

‡‡ = flood, storm, unusual noises, strange discoveries (herbs, corpses, lost items, etc.), found food, etc.

NOTE: Reroll event if appropriate (e.g., fish are encountered in a dry field). See Sections 4.0-5.0 for Animals and Monsters.

Use of the Encounter Table and Codes:

The GM should determine the group's location and the appropriate column and then roll for a possible encounter. The period of time covered by an encounter roll is either the **Time** given on the table or the time it takes the group to cover the **Distance** given on the table, whichever is shorter. If an encounter roll is less than or equal to the **Chance** of Encounter given on the table, a second roll of (1-100) is made to determine the nature of the encounter.

An encounter does not always require a fight of similar activity; a group can avoid or placate some of the above dangers/meetings with proper action or good maneuver rolls. This table only gives the GM a guide for encounters with unusual or potentially dangerous sites or creatures.

KEY TO THE NPC TABLE

NOTE: If an NPC is *poit'n-crazed*, add +10 to his OB. In such case, he cannot elect to parry.

‡ = female NPC.

CODES The statistics given describe each NPC; a more detailed description of some of the more important NPC's can be found in the main text. Some of the codes are self-explanatory **Lvl** (level), **Hits**, **Sh** (shield), and **Mov M** (movement and maneuver bonus). The more complex codes are listed below.

AT (Armor Type) The two letter code gives the being's **MERP** armor type (No = No Armor, SL = Soft leather, RL = Rigid Leather, Ch = Chain, Pl = Plate); the number is the equivalent **Rolemaster** armor type.

DB (Defensive Bonus) Note defensive bonuses include stats and shield. Shield references include quality bonuses (e.g., "Y5" indicates "Yes, a +5 shield").

Gr (Greaves) "A" and "L" are used to indicate arm and leg greaves respectively.

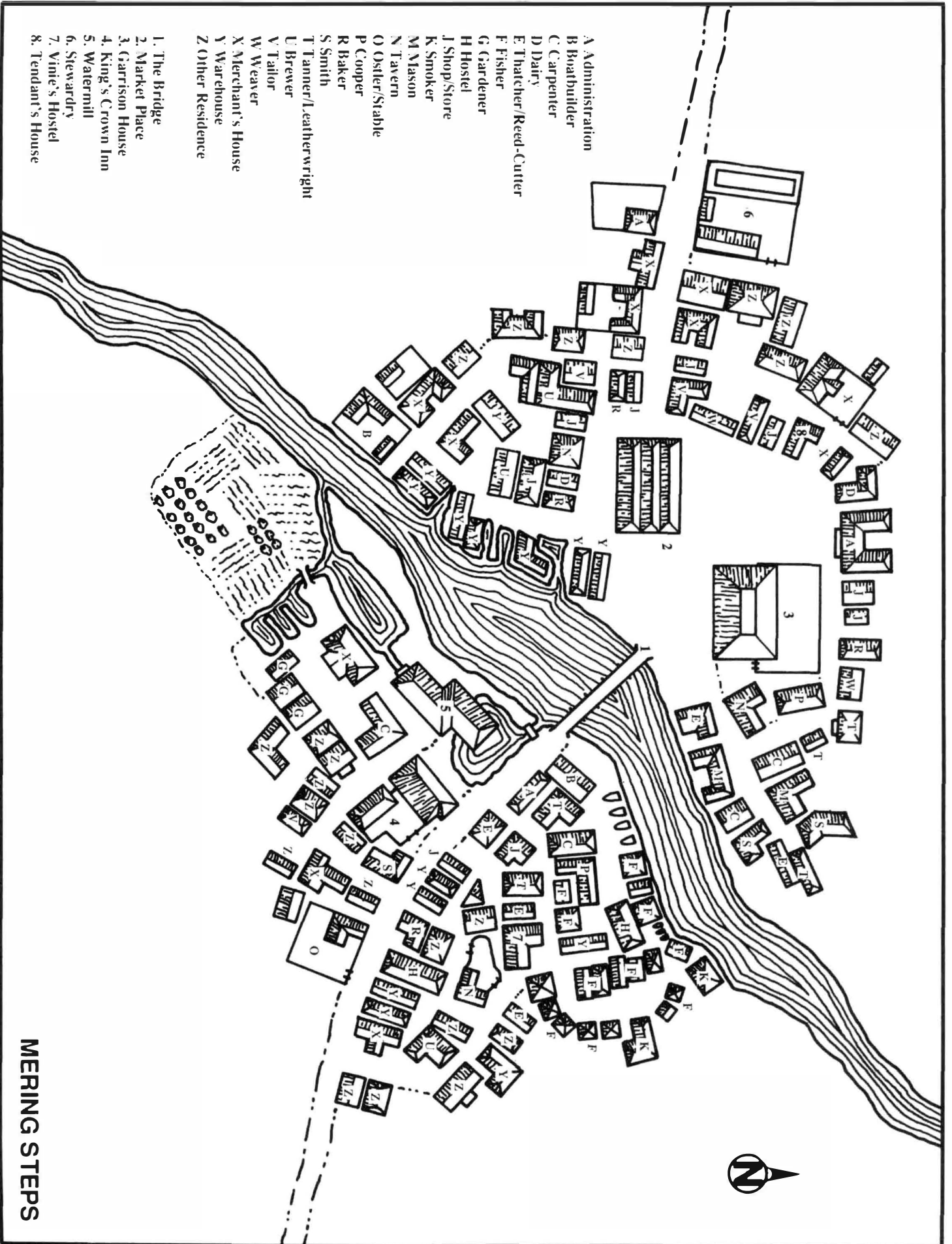
OB's (Offensive Bonuses) Weapon abbreviations follow OB's fa — falchion, ss — short sword, bs — broadsword, sc — scimitar, th — two-handed sword, ma — mace, ha — hand axe, wh — war hammer, ba — battle axe, wm — war mattock, cl — club, qs — quarter staff, da — dagger, sp — spear, ml — mounted lance, ja — javelin, pa — pole arm, sl — sling, cb — composite bow, sb — short bow, lb — long bow, lcb — light crossbow, hcb — heavy crossbow, bo — bola, wp — whip, ts — throwing star, hb — halberd. Melee and missile offensive bonuses include the bonus for the combatant's best weapon in that category.

9.2 NPC TABLE										
Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	2ndary/			Notes
							Melee	Missile	Mov	
							OB	OB	M	
NPC'S FOR ADVENTURE #1: "WATER OF LIFE"										
LOCAL GARRISON										
Amtaur	9	124	Ch/13	45	Y	N	121bs	77cp	5	Urb. Man Warr. Customs Master of Mering Steps. 102th.
Thalion	7	108	Ch/14	50	Y10	L	98bs	51cp	0	Dúnadan Warrior. Young Knight from Anórien.
Erkam	4	80	Ch/14	30	Y	A/L	70bs	40cp	-5	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Sergeant.
Cormacar	4	51	SL/5	35	Y	N	43bs	58lb	5	Rural Man Ranger. Knows 1 list to 10th lvl. 12PP.
Lancer	3	50	Ch/14	30	Y	L	50ml	60cp	-5	Rural Man Warrior. Carries target shield.
Lancer	2	40	Ch/14	25	Y	L	45ml	50cp	-10	Rural Man Warrior. Carries target shield.
Archer	3	50	SL/6	30	Y	L	50bs	70lb	-5	Rural Man Warrior.
Archer	2	40	SL/6	25	Y	L	40bs	55lb	-10	Rural Man Warrior.
Scout	3	37	No/l	45	Y	N	60ss	60cp	20	Rural Man Scout. Know 1 sp. list to 5th lvl. 3PP.
SMUGGLERS										
Ringór	5	70	No/l	35	N	N	55ss	60cp	10	Rural Man Scout. Know 2 lists to 5th lvl. 10PP.
Fecandra	4	31	No/l	5	N	N	34da	58lb	15	Urban Man† Bard. Knows 2 lists to 10th lvl. 4PP.
Elanta	1	20	No/l	25	—	—	40SCI	30SBI	VF	Blue Otter (Familiar).
Lúvapor	3	54	SL/5	10	N	N	31ha	60cp	5	Rural Man Ranger.
Breorh	3	77	Ch/14	5	N	A	79bs	34cp†	10	Éothraim Warrior. 64sp. †=missing weapon.
Taska	2	53	SL/6	10	N	N	61yu	36sl	5	Easterling Warrior. Yurgas: +51 1-h; +31 thrown;
										Fumble 01-5; Cr.=SL/PU(A); Rge=25'; -5 1-h; +5 2-h.
Edorhil	3	36	SI/5	15	N	N	28sp	18sb	0	Rural Man Scout. Knows 1 lists to 5th lvl. 3PP.
OTHER FOLK										
Rieldir	3	33	No/l	5	N	N	37ss	37cp	5	Urban Man Bard/Seer. Know 3 lists to 10th lvl. 8PP.
Uruiwen	4	40	No/l	15	N	N	48bs	34sp	15	Urban Man†; Scout/Rogue. The Tendant.
Miena	3	31	No/l	5	N	N	39da	39sp	5	Urban Man† Scout/Rogue. Innkeeper.
Virloch	4	38	No/l	0	N	N	48bs	34sp	0	Rural Man Scout. Runs mill.
Bethlam	3	34	No/l	10	N	N	31cl	26da	10	Rural Man† Scout. Bedlam's wife.
Servant	1	20	No/l	10	N	N	31cl	26da	10	Rural Man Scout.
Clerk	1	19	No/l	5	N	N	26da	26da	5	Urban Man Bard.
NPC'S FOR ADVENTURE #2: "MICANDOR'S TOWER"										
PRINCIPAL NPCs										
Hieryan	6	100	Ch/14	45	Y	A/L	101bs	63cp	0	Dúnadan Warrior. Keeper of Micandor's Tower.
Yoruvë	4	60	No/l	0	N	N	68sp	—	10	Dúnadan Animist†. Hieryan's Wife. 5 lists to 10th lvl. 12 PP.
Rognir	1	21	No/l	-5	N	N	41ha	31sp	-5	Rural Man Scout/Rogue. Tower groom. He has a withered leg.
Ionanna	1	17	No/l	15	N	N	36da	26cl	15	Rural Man† Scout. Tower maid. He oversees the laundry.
Gael	1	24	No/l	5	N	N	46ss	36da	5	Rural Man Scout/Thief. Tower cook. Deals in illegal wares.
Bettring	3	45	SL/5	10	N	N	56bs	38sp	10	Rural Man Ranger. Pilot.
Pauren	4	46	SL/5	35	Y	N	54bs	69cp	20	Rural Man Scout. Pilot. Often drunk; enamored of Angrid.
Angrid	5	63	RL/9	15	N	N	70qs	85sl	20	Rural Man† Ranger. Pilot. Knows 1 list to 10th lvl. 10 PP.
Direvel	3	55	Ch/14	30	Y	A/L	59bs	39sb	-5	Rural Man Warrior. Senior guard.
Teiglor	3	62	Ch/14	35	Y	A/L	71bs	49lcb	0	Urban Man Warrior. Senior guard.
Nísi	4	73	Ch/14	30	N	A/L	92th	42sp	20	Lesser Dúnadan Warrior. Senior guard.
GARRISON										
Henderch	3	53	Ch/14	30	Y	L	50ml	60cp	10	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Gathir	3	51	Ch/14	25	Y	A/L	55ml	45cp	5	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Fumall	3	50	Ch/14	35	Y	L	50ml	60cp	15	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Ulrod	2	44	Ch/14	25	Y	L	55ml	45cp	-5	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Surion	2	42	Ch/14	25	Y	L	50ml	50sb	0	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Phreir	2	40	Ch/13	30	Y	N	50ml	45sb	10	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Lancer. Carries target shield.
Mathed	2	41	SL/6	25	Y	L	45ss	50cp	5	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Archer.
Sisimmion	2	43	SL/6	20	Y	L	40bs	55cp	0	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Archer.
Larn	2	38	SL/5	25	Y	N	45bs	55cp	5	Rural Man Warrior. Garrison Archer.
TRADER'S CREW										
Orian	1	44	SL/5	10	N	N	30qs	40sl	10	Rural Man Warrior.
Barach	1	41	SL/6	15	N	A	40ha	35sp	15	Rural Man Warrior.
Úner Edolin	7	52	SL/5	40	Y	N	52bs	67da	20	Rural Man Scout/Rogue. Knows 1 list to 5th lvl. 4PP. 7PP.
GRAIN BOAT CREW										
Núil	1	43	SL/5	10	N	N	30qs	40sl	10	Rural Man Warrior.
Echad	1	39	SL/5	5	N	N	40bs	30sl	5	Rural Man Warrior.
Drengist	1	40	SL/5	10	N	N	30sp	40sp	10	Rural Man Warrior.
Hathon	1	42	SL/5	15	N	N	35ss	35sp	15	Rural Man Warrior.
Lissuin	2	28	No/l	5	N	N	22da	22da	10	Urban Man† Bard. Knows 1 list to 10th lvl. 2PP.

NAME	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8	PC9	PC10	PC11	PC12	PC13	PC14	PC15	PC16	PC17	PC18
Race:	Dunlending	Easterling	Dunadan	Dunadan	Rural Man	Nando	Eothraim	Kuduk	Woodman	Urban Man	Lsr Dun	Half Elf	Sinda	Eothraim	Rural Man	Rural Man	Dunlending	Urban Man
HL/AW:	4'7"/105	6'0"/200	5'6"/168	6'2"/206	5'8"/165	6'2"/184	6'5"/255	4'10"/190	5'9"/148	5'9"/188	5'6"/129	5'7"/154	5'5"/172	5'8"/148	6'3"/154	5'9"/175	5'11"/183	6'3"/194
Eyes:	Black	Li.Brown	Blue	Grey	Li.Blue	Li.Grey	Li.Blue	Grey	Hazel	Brown	Brown	Blue	Green	Blue	Grey	Li.Brown	Green	Violet
Hair:	Brown	Li.Brown	Black	Black	Dk.Blond	Black	Black	Grey	Li.Brown	Brown	Black	Red	Black	Brown	Dk.Brown	Dk.Brown	Blond	Sandy
Level:	Warrior	Warrior	Warrior	Ranger	Ranger	Ranger	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout	Scout
Hits:	33	57	87	58	46	59	21	49	49	19	41	51	26	38	57	28	45	75
AT/DB:	RL(35)	CH(25)	CH(20)	No(35)	RL(25)	SL(50)	SL(15)	SL(40)	SL(40)	No(0)	No(20*)	No(5)	SL(25)	RL*(30)	SL(5)	No(5)	No(25*)	No(30)
Shield:	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y*	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y
Power Points:	-	[3]	5	1(+1)	-	10	-	-	-	1(+1)	3(+2)	20	1(+1)	6	15(+2)	1	3	5(+2)
Base Sp. OB:	x	x	0	0	x	0	x	x	x	2	6	10	2	6	10	1	3	5
Strength:	91	90	95	75	76	50	81	50	90	22	75	52	75	63	71	43	39	91
Agility:	75	34	83	30	76	95	90	99	95	43	81	67	91	35	77	20	77	88
Constitution:	53	50	43	90	90	90	64	66	28	25	47	39	68	44	48	63	48	83
Intelligence:	43	64	79	73	28	30	70	56	71	91	91	96	61	58	69	83	76	84
Intuition:	73	81	30	87	70	75	47	70	38	79	61	34	90	90	100	55	35	46
Presence:	76	29	61	56	28	78	79	44	86	56	40	67	76	58	26	101	90	90
Appearance:	34	93	73	44	6	77	49	60	32	84	97	60	85	13	84	47	76	100
NA Move M:	10	20	15	5	15	35	15	40	25	5	10	10	30	15	15	10	15	15
SL Move M:	x	x	x	x	-5	25	10	35	15	x	x	x	10	x	5	-5	x	x
RL Move M:	-5	x	-20	-15	-20	x	-15	x	x	x	-20	-35	x	0	-20	-20	-20	-20
CH Move M:	x	10	10	-25	0	x	-25	x	x	x	x	-35	x	-20	-35	-25	x	-20
IHE OB:	x	64sc	64ks	32bs	51ha	30da	36bs	13ss	30da	5da	35ss	10ss	20sc	45bs	10da	16ha	x	50bs
IHC OB:	25ma	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	33net	x
2HOB:	x	x	92th	17th	x	45th	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	35qs	x	x	25th
Thrown OB:	28ma	14da	35sp	x	16da/sp	40da	x	68kn	30sp	x	15da	x	x	x	40da	1ha	23net	x
Missile OB:	18sb	34cp	55xb	12cp	31lb	85lb	26cp	68sl	50lb	5xb	25xb	25sb	35lb	10xb	10xb	6sl	18sb	40cp
Polearm OB:	48sp	44(+10)ml	45sp	17sp	21sp	x	21sp	x	65sp	x	x	x	x	15ml	10sp	11sp	48hb	25ml
Climb:	46	8	x	x	19	50	x	48	60	x	x	10	26	18	x	11	68	15
Ride:	6	33	10	13	19	30	41	13	x	10	20	25	21	65	35	6	x	35
Swim:	16	18	40	13	24	75	21	53	50	10	25	30	36	18	50	16	13	15
Track:	x	28	35	28	39	65	x	18	30	x	25	x	6	13	x	x	23	x
Ambush:	x	x	5	11	4	x	11	5	5	x	x	x	x	3	x	x	3	x
Stalk/Hide:	20	15	30	12	26	75	27	46	60	x	5	15	35	15	5	41	33	25
Pick Lock:	5	x	x	x	x	x	x	26	40	20	x	x	35	15	5	41	33	35
Disarm Trap:	x	x	x	x	10	35	x	6	20	x	x	x	x	6	50	6	x	30
Read Rune:	x	x	10	10	x	5	x	x	x	22	36	55	6	x	10	x	18	40
Use Item:	x	x	5	10	x	x	x	x	x	27	26	35	26	x	45	x	x	35
Dir Spell:	x	x	10	x	x	x	x	x	x	8	34	70	x	x	20	1	18	35
Perception:	5	35	25	27	26	60	13	39	50	20	20	30	36	33	60	11	23	30
2ndry skill	Herding30	Smith40	Rowing50	Singing30	Forage40	WCarve50	Oxletry30	Tumble60	RopeM40	Surgaze35	Metal25	Music55	Mediate45	Lying40	Sailing60	Storytell55	PSpeak65	Singing60
2ndry Skill:	x	x	x	x	Cookery25	Herbs40	Gamble25	Trickery20	Rowing40	Acting	x	Dance40	x	Forage35	SetTraps25	Music30	BawdySongs35	Hi story40
Language:	Dun 5	Sag 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Kud 5	Nah 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Dun 5	Adu 5
Language:	Wes 4	Wes 4	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 4	B.S. 3	Adu 4	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5
Language:	Slin 2	x	Slin 5	Dun 5	x	Wes 5	Wes 5	Dun 3	Slin 2	Que 2	Slin 4	Que 5	Wes 5	Log 2	Adu 3	x	Slin 4	Slin 4
Language:	Sag 2	Slin 3	Wail 2	Adu 2	Que 1	Nah 2	Sag 2	Slin 3	Wail 2	Adu 2	Que 1	Nah 2	Que 5	Nah 2	Har 3	x	Kud 3	B.S. 4
Language:	x	x	Ork 2	Que 1	x	Atl 3	x	x	x	x	x	x	Wail 5	x	x	x	x	Que 3
Spell List:	x	x	Ess Hand	Protectins	x	Path Mast	x	x	x	Fire Law	Phys Enh	EssHand	Blood Ways	Spell Def	Plant M	Cont.S.	Ess Hand	Lore
Spell List:	x	x	x	x	Surface W	Nature's L	x	x	x	Spirit M	Light Law	Illusions	Direct Chn	Creations	Purificns	x	Cont.S.	Ess Perc
Spell List:	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Spell ways	Wind Law	x	Animal M	Blood Ways	x	Item Lore	Cont.S.
Spell List:	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Living Chg	x	x	Detection M	x	x	Spell Ways
Spell List:	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Magic Items & Special Possessions

- PC1: Bowl of *Sustain Self 1 Dream 1*.
 PC2: Roan horse, +10 MM; Horseshoe Totem allows casting of *Spell/Defuse* spells (use own PP).
 PC3: +10 chain. Winged Spear with x3 range; Rune Paper with *Earthwall* and *Airwall*.
 PC4: Glass Vial holding knotted herbs, +1 spell adder; Felt Cap +15 Perception.
 PC5: +10 handaxe, can throw "image": 3/day (if target makes RR, no damage); Cloak +10 S/H, *Speed 1* 2/day.
 PC6: +10 buckler (small shield +15DB); +20 dagger of Orc-slaying: 5 *Reck 1 Aldaka*, 1 *Arpsisar*.
 PC7: Saddle *Unseen 1* day for 1 horse + rider; SL Armor can absorb 10 hits from a single blow 3/day.
 PC8: Boots of Limbwalking; +10 Elven shortsword; potion of *Long Ear*, 2 doses.
 PC9: +15 longbow; 3 Arrows of Slaying (Trolls, Spiders, Wargs); Bracelets, Acrobatics +100 1/day, for 12 rds.
 PC10: 2 potions of *Poison Resistance*; Marble Orb (weighs 20 lbs) +1 spell adder.
 PC11: Gold-thread Waistcoat +10 DB; Ash Staff +2 spell adder; 5 +10 gilt quarrels.
 PC12: Rope of Pearls (9') x2PP, +20 to cast *Water-Law* spells, +20 Dance; Rune of *Undwyr*; Potion 2x sight range & perception for 1 hr.
 PC13: Wooden Box turns any green tree leaf into a +1 spell adder, 1/day (must be used within 1 hr, only 1st 3rd lvl spells); 1 dose *Harfy*.
 PC14: Rigid Leather Armor +10 MM; +10 broadsword with jewelled leather scabbard x2 PP multiplier; Potion of *Poison Purification*.
 PC15: Holy Oak Quarterstaff +20 OB and +2 (healing) spell adder; Ring of *Bless 4* day.
 PC16: Clarsach (harp) +10 Music and *Great Song 1* day; Potion of *Cair Repair III*.
 PC17: Steel Bracers set with emeralds +15 DB; +10 net; Pipes of *Cull Rain 1* week.
 PC18: +15 bastard sword, additional Cold crits; Finger Drum +2 spell adder; Silver Collar +50 Poison RR; Rune of *Assessment True*.







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Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP) is perfect for the novice as well as experienced gamers. Designed with faithful attention to Tolkien's world, *MERP* provides rules covering combat, magic, professions, and everything necessary for adventuring in Middle-earth. *MERP* is the perfect lead-in to the more complex *Rolemaster* system.

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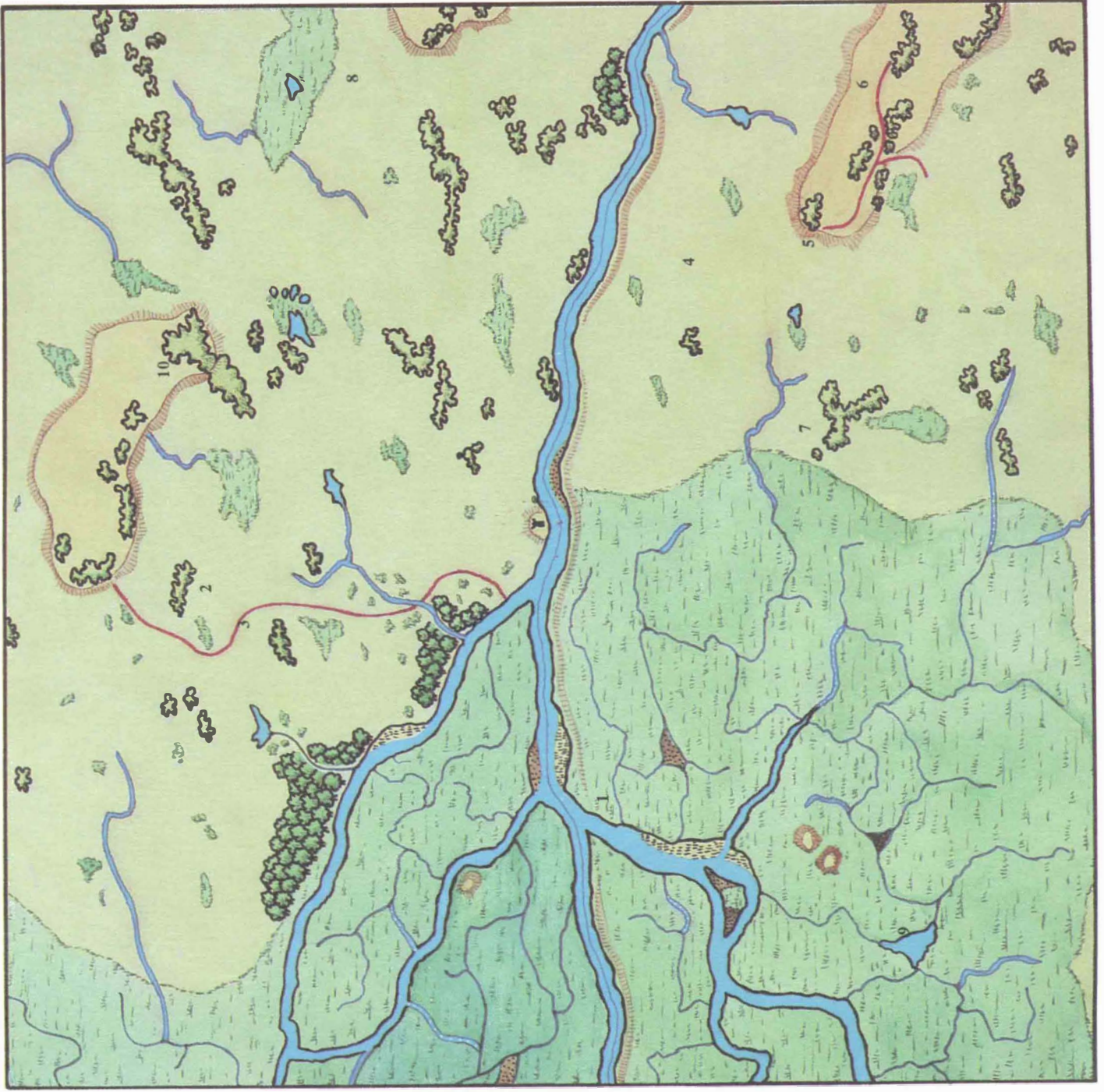
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MICANDOR'S TOWER

~ LOCALE ~



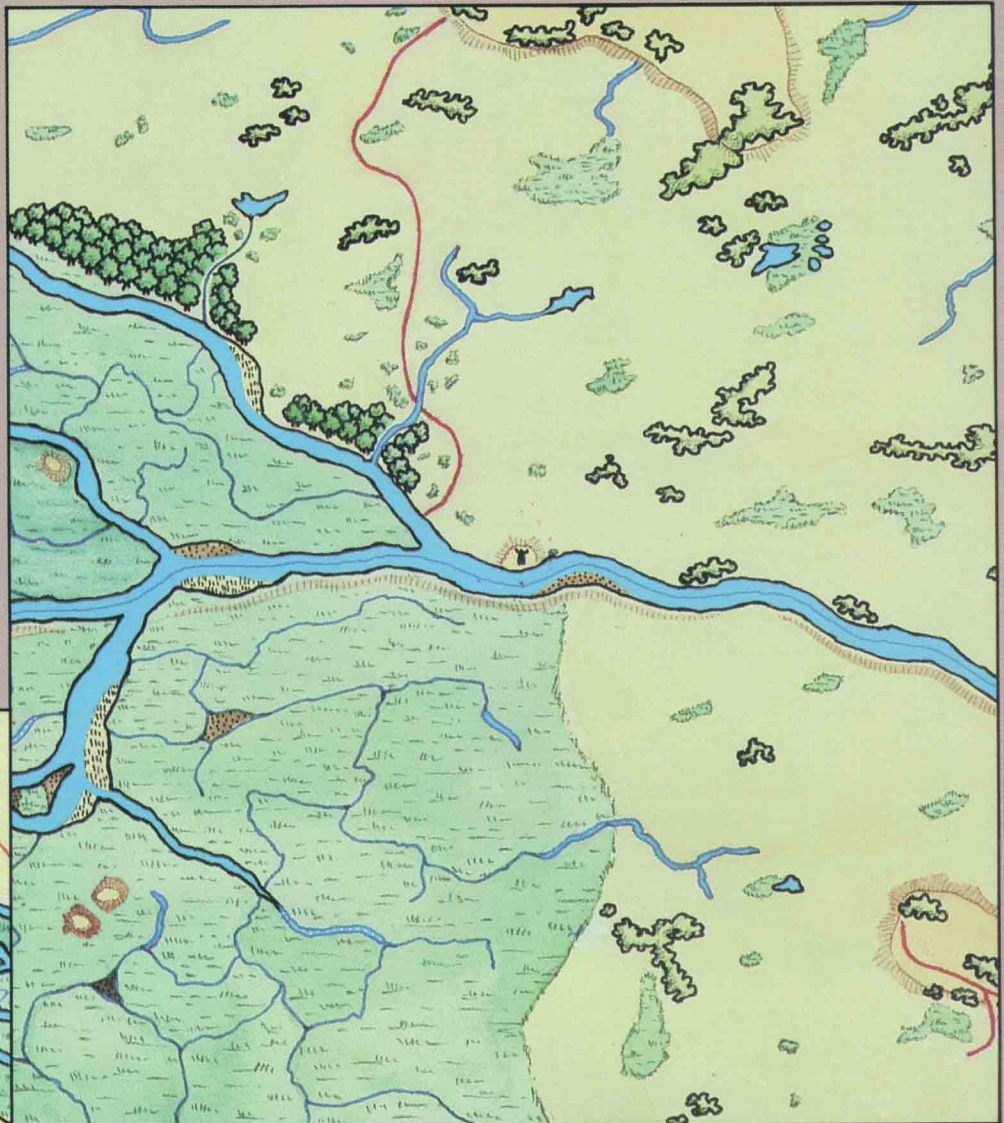
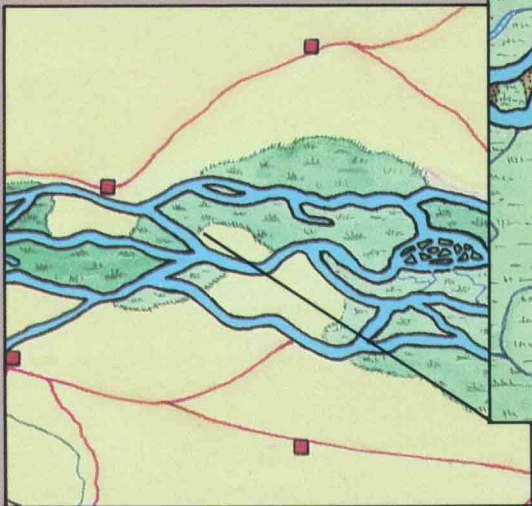
- Rivulets (<1y)
- Hazardous Channels (1y)
- Navigable Channels (2y)
(coracle/punt)
- (raft/rowboat/skiff) (10y)
- Major Channel (50y)
- Dredged Channel (150)
- Reed Bed
- Mud Bank, 'Beach', Mud Flat
- Levee
- Island in Marsh
- Bog
- Pool
- Thickets
- Scrub
- Raised Land
- Micandor's Tower
- trail/track



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